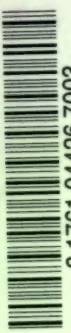


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EX-KING CONSTANTINE AND THE WAR





Eug. BURNAND
Paris 1911

G. Mélas

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[After the original by Eugene Burnand.]

MAJOR MÉLAS.

[Frontispiece.]

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EX-KING CONSTANTINE AND THE WAR



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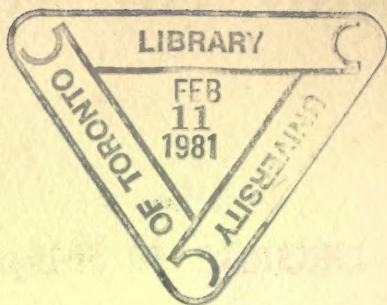
BY
GEORGE M. MÉLAS
(His former Secretary)



LONDON: HUTCHINSON & CO.
PATERNOSTER ROW

1920





To the memory of my brother Paul
and of the brave men who gave their lives
in the struggle to win back the honour of their country

I dedicate these pages

G. MÉLAS

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FOREWORD

BEFORE leaving for the front, I had requested my son to see that, in the event of my falling on the field of battle, nothing I had written should be published until twenty-five years after my death. But yielding to the pressure brought to bear on me by many of my friends, and influenced more especially by the recent odious plot against M. Veniselos and the nation, a plot the object of which was patent to everybody, I decided to commit to paper not, indeed, a complete and orderly record of events, but just such incidents and reminiscences as might happen, from time to time, to come into my mind.

I deem that when a man has occupied a position of trust and has been enabled to see what went on behind the scenes, he is not justified, when he at length relinquishes office, in divulging to all and sundry, the various things which came beneath his notice. There is possibly also something to be said for not destroying the illusions entertained by those whose lives are spent remote from the artificial and misleading atmosphere of Courts and Council Chambers. There are, nevertheless, some things that may be revealed without indiscretion, things that we may say, things that it is our bounden duty to say, despite the aureate quality

that is wont to be attributed to silence. The events of November last almost compel me to break the silence that I have hitherto maintained.

Now I wish at the outset to make it abundantly clear that I do not aim at writing the history of King Constantine's reign ; my intention is merely to give publicity to those facts, documents, stories and reminiscences of events of which I have had personal cognizance. Having had occasion to meet M. Veniselos in London, I might have requested him to give me a detailed account of the events herein recorded. I did not do so because I should have diminished the anecdotal value of this book had I restricted myself to a cut-and-dried enumeration of incidents. To do so, moreover, would have been inconsistent with the unambitious character of this work. I cannot too emphatically insist that I do not claim to have written a history ; all I have attempted to do is to make the history of the period more readily understood, by throwing some light—though in such a haphazard way as will certainly earn me the condemnation of the critics—on the principal personages of the drama. I therefore crave the indulgence of the reader, and I shall esteem myself amply rewarded if I succeed in engaging his interest.

Battle Abbey,
January, 1920.

EX-KING CONSTANTINE AND THE WAR

I

KING CONSTANTINE

IT is not my intention to attempt a minute portrait of the King any more than to write his history. His history, unhappily, he has written himself, and it will perhaps be one day written in still darker characters by posterity. I shall only roughly outline the principal traits that make up the portrait of the man. My intention, indeed, is to give the facts and to leave to the reader the task of portraying for himself the manifold and diverse constituents of which the King's nature was compounded. By this means I shall be assisting to correct the judgment of those people—and they are numerous—who think they know him already. One may well inquire, when one reflects how little their official biographers are sometimes acquainted with them, whether monarchs are ever really known to the world in general.

I quitted the ex-King's service about the end of December, 1915. For more than a year I had

striven daily, and with all the energy at my command, to fulfil the hope that sometimes seemed as though it would eventually be realized, of persuading him to abandon his neutrality and declare in favour of the Entente.

From the days of our childhood onwards, that is to say for more than forty years, our mutual intercourse was never interrupted. He invariably displayed great friendliness, confidence and esteem towards me. And even when I was in his service and he knew that I was devoted heart and soul to the policy of the man who, from the very outset, I looked upon as the incarnation of the Hellenic spirit—need I say that I refer to M. Veniselos—even then, I say, he retained me at his side despite all the intrigues of my colleagues, whose jealousy was excited by the royal favours of which I was the object. Nay more, even when, feeling that I could no longer look on unmoved at the betrayal of my country's interests—I should rather say of my country itself—for the sake of Germany and our worst enemies, I handed him my resignation, he sent me word by Colonel Scoumbourdis, his principal aide-de-camp, that he did not accept it, and desired me to remain at my post, the only condition being that I should inform no one that I had intended to resign. I deferred to his wishes. Perhaps I was hoping against hope that things would even then take a different course. But what was chiefly in my mind was that I was his only real friend, and that if I quitted him, I should be delivering him over to the evil counsellors who surrounded him, whose tool in the carrying out of their selfish

and nefarious machinations he would inevitably become. But the King, who never could keep a secret, spoke of my resignation to Streit, and possibly also to Dousmanis and Gounaris, told them about his refusal to accept it and how he had made it a condition that the matter was not to be talked about. These gentlemen, who saw in me an adversary ever ready to combat their growing and sinister influence, quickly realized that here was an admirable opportunity for procuring my dismissal from the Court. And so a couple of days later, when I had gone away to spend the holidays with my sister Madame Anna Papadopulo, the *Nea Himerá*, Streit's own particular organ, came out with a flaring announcement of my resignation.

These gentlemen, of course, made haste to convince the King that I had turned a deaf ear to his request, and urged him to sign a decree relieving me of my functions. A report of my dismissal was published in the papers controlled by them, and called forth a heated denial from my brother Constantine, an ex-naval officer, who was then a deputy and fully acquainted with the real facts.

That was the only time King Constantine listened to any intrigues against me. It was a sorry piece of vindictiveness and unworthy of a king. He had just purely and simply to accept my resignation. But the King did not stop there. Shortly afterwards, having gone back to my military duties, I was ordered to leave Athens and to proceed to the Macedonian front. Liveratos, the unscrupulous Liveratos, who was then Procureur du Roi and at

the same time one of the Chief of the "Epistrati,"* armed himself with an order from the Government of Athens, and on the strength of it carried out a domiciliary visit at my abode to see if he could find among my papers anything of a compromising nature concerning the ex-King.

When, however, I left his service, I wrote to His Majesty, informing him that he could rely on my discretion. As a matter of fact, before leaving Athens, I had put all my papers in order, destroying such as were of no further use or related to my duties at Court. It is, therefore, not in the least surprising that this egregious functionary and his myrmidons failed to discover the sort of thing they wanted. They consoled themselves for their disappointment by forcing all my locks and carrying away a quantity of articles that had absolutely no connection with the papers in question. The only things that were sent to the King were a few personal mementoes and the entire collection of autographed photographs presented to me by the various members of the Royal family. I subsequently learned through my ex-colleague, M. Roidi, that His Majesty threw the photographs on the fire with his own hand and gave orders that the papers contained in the valise sent to the Palace should be examined.

I have already said that the King could not keep a secret ; and that is the truth. It was not that he felt the need to be always talking and opening his heart that is characteristic of the ordinary

* Reservists.

gossip, for a gossip the King was not ; nor, in reality, was he a slave to his feelings. What made him talk in the way he did was that he was overconfident, and generally ill-advisedly so, in others, reposing an almost childlike trust in any new-comer. Constantine shared the defect common to most monarchs, the inability, that is to say, to recognize who were really worthy of his confidence, of the confidence of a king. Thus he spoke without reserve to almost anyone to whom he granted an interview, and opened his heart to all and sundry, often without weighing the importance of his words.

It thus often happened that many people, not infrequently foreigners, were much flattered and not a little moved at being, as they might well believe, thus singled out as the repositories of the King's private thoughts and even of important secrets of state.

I know more than one French politician who thus unconsciously allowed himself to be misled by the King into believing himself called upon to play the part of intermediary, with sometimes deplorable consequences. To cite but one instance, the Deputy M. B., who (according at least to what I have heard, for I had quitted the Court long before M. B. went to Athens) left the Royal presence much more of a King's man than a republican. I am quite disposed to believe that it was so, for when General Sarrail was at Salonica and mentioned my name one day to M. B., referring to me by my former title of Secretary to His Majesty, M. B. treated me with exceptional deference.

I could instance several others who, from merely

conversing with His Majesty, emerged from the interview more royalist than the King. Among all the various notabilities who passed through Athens in the course of the war, only two were able to withstand the blandishments of the royal presence and to maintain their independence of judgment. Those two were General Sarrail and General Roques, then Minister of War.

Talking of French generals, I cannot forbear to make mention of General Pau, whom the King received in audience on the 3rd February, 1915, when he was passing through Athens on his way to carry out his mission in the Balkans. The King was particularly gracious to General Pau and exceedingly pleased to see him. The General referred to the German Army, and, like a true soldier, did not underestimate the capabilities of his adversary. "They are very fine troops that we have to contend with," said he. The King was delighted. He repeated what the General had said again and again, with some highly eulogistic references to the General himself. "That man is a real soldier," His Majesty remarked to me. "I was genuinely pleased to meet him."

It was in the course of this interview that King Constantine told the General that the right way to Constantinople was not through the Dardanelles but by way of Sofia. It was a view well worth pondering upon. It was the opinion held by our General Staff, who were better able to judge of the matter than anyone else, and it was a perfectly sound one, as subsequent events only too clearly



EX-KING CONSTANTINE.

[To face page 6.]



demonstrated. Unfortunately the British Admiralty did not see its way to profit by the valuable advice that was given to it.

While on the subject of Royal audiences, I must mention the interview with the King granted to Lord Kitchener on the 30th November, 1915. In accordance with what generally took place after the King had received a personage of distinction, I was about to make my way into the Royal presence immediately after Lord Kitchener's departure in order that I might hear the King's impressions while the conversation was still fresh in his mind, when I was forestalled by the Queen. Unknown to me, she had been waiting in the billiard-room, which was exactly opposite the King's apartment, watching for the General to go, and chatting the while with the indispensable Colonel Metaxas. She, too, was anxious to learn what the British General had said and what reply the Kaiser's brother-in-law had made to him. She was, above all, desirous of nipping in the bud whatever impression favourable to the Entente might have been left by the interview on her husband's mind.

But Lord Kitchener, according to what I was told by the King, whom I saw immediately the Queen came out, had not vilified Germany. In discussing the situation with His Majesty, he had spoken freely as regards the attitude of Greece. The result was that the King had nothing but good to say about him, and remarked to me that he was "a very straight man." This was not to be wondered at, for Lord Kitchener had expressed his entire approval

of the King's neutrality. He disapproved of the Salonica expedition and said it was useless, or at all events too late. Referring to the operations on the Western front, he said that he merely looked on what the British Army was then doing as large scale manœuvres for training purposes. The army was then in process of formation, and it would, he said, take a good three years to make it a match for the adversaries with whom it had to contend. And, with a laugh, Lord Kitchener asked the King whether he thought three years was a long time to ask for, seeing that it had taken Germany forty years to prepare for the war.

Herein Lord Kitchener showed himself a better prophet than in the case of the Macedonian front. The British Army wrought miracles, particularly when it is remembered that at the outbreak of war it consisted, I believe, of not more than eleven divisions, and that in the short space of time available it trained several million men for the fighting line. As the chief creator of this army justly observed, the British Army showed that it was equal to the task before it, by the brilliant manner in which it defeated the Germans.

Reverting for a moment to the ex-King's unfortunate inability to keep a secret, I will mention a fact which, although it has no connection with the world war, will afford convincing testimony of the accuracy of my allegation.

In 1912, while the war against Turkey was in progress, I was sent by General Sapountzakis, during the siege of Jannina, to Philippias, where were the

Headquarters of King Constantine, then Crown Prince and Commander-in-Chief. My orders were to obtain the very latest instructions of the General Staff for the attempt that was to be made on the morrow to take Jannina by assault. When I arrived, I found everybody in a state of inconceivable excitement. Officers were hurrying to and fro; whisperings here and whisperings there, talk of arresting this person or that; altogether it was clear that something very grave and very unusual was taking place that morning. At length I managed to button-hole a friend of mine, who was calmer than the rest. Speaking with a great air of mystery, he told me we had been betrayed, that there was certainly a traitor in the camp, that our plan of attack had been divulged and that all the foreign military attachés were already acquainted with the nature of the projected operations, despite the precautions that had been taken to keep them secret. Finally he said that the attack had been indefinitely postponed, seeing that we could no longer count on the element of surprise—an essential element of success. I was dumbfounded.

Let me here remark, by way of parenthesis, that, as orderly officer to the General commanding the army of Epirus and before the Crown Prince arrived on our front, I always allowed the Russian, British and French attachés—Lieut.-Col. Goudine-Lefkowitz, Major Cunliffe Owen and Captain Denvigne—to accompany me to the most advanced positions, while I put every sort of obstacle in the way of their German, Austrian and Italian confrères. As to whether I had a presentiment of what was to come,

I cannot deny that I may have had some sort of foreboding. At any rate, it is a fact that these gentlemen were furious, and went back to Athens after complaining about me to the General.

In the afternoon of that same day I took leave of His Royal Highness, who seemed just as aghast as all the rest of the staff at the indiscretion that had been committed. Before returning to the front, I went to take a cup of tea with Mademoiselle P., a charming lady who was "honorary" correspondent to a foreign newspaper, and who was at that time honoured by the friendship of the Crown Prince, who paid her frequent visits. Mademoiselle P. also spoke to me of the projected attack, and that in the presence of other persons, among whom were some foreign military attachés. She referred to the matter in such minute detail that I was literally taken off my feet. Concealing my astonishment, however, I asked her how she was able to refer with such an air of certitude to matters that were still in the air, and made every endeavour to induce her to change the topic. She insisted, however, on returning to the subject, and, deeming that I was less accurately informed than herself, ended by remarking in the most natural manner in the world :

"But, *cher ami*, I am in any case better posted than you are, for it was the Crown Prince who told me all about the matter the day before yesterday !"

I slipped away as soon as I could find an excuse and hurried off to Headquarters, where the explanation of the whole business had also just become known. From that day forth, by order of the

Chief of the General Staff, all the officers maintained a respectful silence in the presence of the generalissimo regarding the prospective operations. The plans were radically altered and the attack postponed. As is well known, it was a brilliant success, and, as is usual in such cases, all the credit went to the Royal generalissimo. I mention this for the enlightenment of those who imagine that because a man is born to a throne he is also necessarily born a strategist.

Another trait in the King's character, and it is with much regret that I put it on record, is his rancour. The King never forgets an injury or a slight. His kindness of heart may lead him to forgive, but he never completely forgets. I am fully aware that by writing this book and setting forth the plain facts, I am making a mortal enemy of him. King Constantine is one of those men who, whatever else they may pardon, never forgive those who unmask them to the world. Constantine never appreciated the truth of Plato's dictum, that states could never know happiness unless they had philosophers for kings or unless their kings were philosophers. There could be no more conspicuous, no more public proof of the King's unforgiving nature, than the fact that he suffered his name to be used as a rallying cry on the occasion of a demonstration during the municipal elections in February, 1914, his purpose being to take his revenge on one of the two candidates, M. E. Benachi, who, as Minister a few years previously, had incurred the displeasure of the King, then

Crown Prince, by refusing to grant a certain favour to an undeserving protégé of the latter. This circumstance, despite the manifold good works consistently wrought by M. Benachi since he came to Athens, was quite enough to predispose the King in favour of the other candidate, Mercouris, the well-known future chief of the Epistrati. With the permission of the King, or at all events with his knowledge, since I myself reported the matter to him, the partisans of Mercouris paraded the streets of the capital, shouting: "It is the King's wish; he said it; Mercouris is the man to vote for." I had a shock when I heard this sort of thing being shouted about the streets. I pointed out to the King how dangerous it was to let the populace make use of the Sovereign's name and person in party disputes and electoral quarrels. As a constitutional monarch in a country where universal suffrage was in force, his personal interference was highly improper. I went so far as to ask His Majesty's permission to put a paragraph in the Press officially denying that he had any preference for either candidate. To escape from the dilemma, the King replied that he always refrained on principle from issuing denials. I do not know whether that is good policy for a King, but I ventured to press my point, remarking that in any case it was exceedingly unwise thus to make use of his prestige and popularity in a mere municipal election, and to mix up his name with such a contest, a contest in which he so far lowered himself as to tear down with his walking-stick the posters displaying the portrait of the Veniselist candidate.

However, when, despite the Royal opposition, the latter was elected Mayor by a large majority, I succeeded, at all events for the time being, in reconciling His Majesty with the new Mayor of Athens ; so successful indeed were my efforts that the King had himself invited one day to dine at Madame Benachi's at Kifissia, after the holding of a charity bazaar organized by Her Royal Highness the Grand Duchess Helena.

An explanation of the King's rancour may perhaps be found in his prodigious memory. When he had read a book through once, he knew it practically by heart. After an audience he could repeat every word that had been spoken. During the first few months of the Great War, when I never used to let a day go by without endeavouring to persuade him to abandon his neutrality, I even went so far as to import Machiavelli into the discussion. One morning I went into his room with the " Education of Princes " under my arm. I wanted the King to read Chapter XIX. and, particularly, Chapter XXI., where the Italian lays it down that a state should always espouse one cause or the other whenever two neighbouring states are at war on its frontiers, as was then our case, Serbia and Bulgaria being then at grips.

" I know Machiavelli by heart ; you needn't worry about the book, I know exactly what you want to show me," said the King, and so we proceeded to discuss the chapter in question. So not even Machiavelli, notwithstanding the Teutonic flavour of so many of his views, was of service to

me in that juncture. Nevertheless, as I went out, I left the book lying on his table, hoping he would open it at the page marked, and so refresh his memory.

A thing that rather struck me with regard to my idea of having recourse to Machiavelli was that when M. Denys Cochin came to Athens a few months later, in November, 1915, and was received in audience by the King, he also mentioned Machiavelli and referred to the same chapters, so, at least, the King told me. I remember I felt very flattered at the time at having had the same idea as the eminent French Hellenophil.

It has always been said that Constantine was extraordinarily obstinate, and that when once he got an idea into his head nothing could induce him to alter it. I say, however, that, contrary to the popular view, his apparent obstinacy was owing to people not knowing how to go to work with him. I often persuaded him to reverse his decisions. Many and many a time has he yielded to my arguments, and I was always able to discuss matters with him without ruffling his temper. However, so deeply rooted in the minds of all classes in Greece was his reputation for pig-headedness that he had been very disrespectfully nicknamed "Duvar Pacha," from a Turkish word used by the common people signifying "stone wall." I do not know whether it was General Dousmanis who was the first to apply the nickname to him, but I have certainly heard him refer to the King in that way scores and scores of times. And even

his obstinate refusal to allow Greece to play her destined part in the war may with more probability be ascribed to his pusillanimity rather than to his self-will. He was the tool of evil counsellors, who, by sheer weight of numbers, overbore his one trusty and far-sighted adviser, M. Veniselos.

Here is another little circumstance to show how widespread was the popular belief in the King's immovable obstinacy. On the 1st November, 1916, I chanced to be at the headquarters of the 88th British Brigade, commanded by General Brooke. I was shown a certain mule which had been christened "Constantinos" after the King. The brigade in question comprised a few Greek battalions which had at first been under the command of the French, who had ordered that all draught horses and mules should be given a number and a name. It seems that on coming to a particularly recalcitrant animal, the whole company exclaimed laughingly and with one accord: "This one's always jibbing; he'll neither go forward nor back. Let's call him Constantine."

There is no doubt that the men were thinking of their recusant King, and his persistent refusal to abandon his neutrality. The British liaison officer who told me the story, although greatly shocked, had nothing for it but to give official sanction to what was, in fact, a conspicuous reflection by the men upon their former King.

The King's credulity sometimes bordered on the puerile. He believed everything he was told. One day in January, 1915, after carefully verifying

some information I had received, I remarked, as I was strolling with him in the Royal garden, that Schenk (who was the real German Minister at Athens—especially since he had procured the recall of Count von Quadt-Wykradt-Isny, notwithstanding the latter's relationship to the Kaiser, and the appointment in his stead of the Count von Mirbach Harff, who was subsequently assassinated in Moscow, and who when at Athens was completely dominated by Baron Schenk von Schweinberg)—I remarked, I say, that Schenk was showing signs of a desire to buy over the Press, and that he had already advanced 15,000 francs to a miserable little rag at Patras, which, in return, had taken up the cudgels in Germany's behalf, displaying particular hostility to M. Veniselos. I did not disguise from the King that I recognized in this the first tentative step in a movement which was bound to have serious consequences if it extended so far as to mean the buying up of the leading Athenian newspapers and the directing of popular opinion into channels inimical to the real interests of Greece. The King began by denying the fact, and with heat, but as I respectfully pointed out to him that I never made a statement without being sure of my ground, and, moreover, that the very manner of his denial was but a further proof of the accuracy of the report, he sharply retorted: "It's not a matter of buying the Press, as you appear to imagine; the whole thing is purely and simply a loan that Baron Schenk has had the generosity to advance to a poor devil of a journalist."

I pretended to believe this story (it is possible

he himself believed it), without proceeding to inquire how it came about that Schenk had happened to discover this little Patras journalist, who, though obscure, also happened to be a friend of Gounaris. That same evening I was dining at the British Legation and I reported the matter to Sir Francis Elliot, as I had done to the French Minister, whom I had chanced to meet that very afternoon. Unfortunately these gentlemen would not recognize the danger or the strength that would accrue to German propaganda by the purchase of a section of the Press. Sir Francis especially, with his characteristically British straightforwardness, was literally shocked when I advised him to employ the same weapons against his adversaries in order to circumvent the machinations of Schenk. When, several months later, these gentlemen confessed themselves convinced, it was already too late. The evil was done, and the price asked by these unprincipled Athenian journals had reached a figure which the Ministers considered far too high.

I must here pay a tribute to the healthy section of the Greek Press which remained loyal to its principles and to the Entente, and refused Baron Schenk's agents admittance to their offices, despite the manifold persecutions to which they were subjected by the King's faction.

The remark I made above concerning British straightforwardness reminds me of an almost identical reply I received when the Germans began, to our horror and amazement, to employ poison-gas. I then expressed the hope that the Allies would lose no time in doing likewise. "Never will

Englishmen have recourse to such barbarous practices," was the indignant reply. However, there was no help for it, they had to be adopted, and we know how effectively and with what great success. When one has to do with murderers, the sword is of little avail. The dagger is what is needed.

Sometimes, like his brothers, the King would indulge in mischievous pranks that might have had unfortunate consequences. For example, one morning in June, 1913, I went into his study as usual and found His Majesty walking up and down the great apartment, occasionally stopping in the middle and then resuming once more his march to and fro, from one door to the other. Notwithstanding my appearance on the scene and the astonishment I evinced, he continued his extraordinary behaviour, smiling mischievously and always coming to a halt in the middle of the room to look at a certain spot on the wall by the window. The sun-blind prevented my distinguishing what it was he was looking at, but I saw that it was a frame hung up on the wall to which he was directing his attention. At length, after allowing my mystification to continue for a few moments longer, the King said with a laugh: "Come here and see if the effect is good and if you can see them all right."

I went up to him, and turning round, looked towards the exit, in the direction indicated, and there I saw hung up George Scott's water-colour representing the Bulgarian prisoners captured in the last Balkan war. It had been left on the ground standing against the wall until that day, the King not

having made up his mind where it was to go. Seeing it now, on the very morning when His Majesty was going to receive, for the first time since the outbreak of war, the new Bulgarian Minister, Monsieur Passaroff, who was coming to present his credentials, I could not restrain an exclamation of protest, and, respectfully calling the King's attention to the fact that both the day for putting it up and the position selected were singularly ill chosen, since on leaving the room the Bulgarian Minister could not help observing it and so receive an unfavourable impression, I asked leave to take the picture down, but His Majesty burst out laughing and, delighted no doubt at seeing from my remarks that his trick was bound to come off, exclaimed :

“Not for the world. Don't you see that that is precisely what I want to happen. It was exactly why I hung it there. I want Passaroff as he goes out to see his countrymen my prisoners. Only tell me if you can really see them plainly from here, for he will have to pass this very spot as he goes out.”

And the King merrily resumed his march up and down in order to make quite certain of the effect which, in a minute or two, would be produced on the hapless Passaroff. Nor did his animosity against the Bulgarians cease there. After the Minister had handed in his credentials, I received a telephone message from the Foreign Office asking me for the Bulgarian Minister's written reply to the King. Neither the Court Chamberlain nor anyone about the Palace could lay hands on the paper in question. The King thereupon pointed to the waste-paper basket and said in tones of disgust :

“ It’s in that basket. What’s the good of a dirty piece of paper like that ? ”

It took me more than half an hour to stick all the various pieces together again so that a copy of the document could be sent to the Foreign Office.

At that time Constantine was still a Bulgarophobe. So far indeed did his feelings carry him in that direction that he delighted to be called “ Bulgaroctone ” (Bulgarian slayer), and when I told him that the epithet was as impolitic as it was horrible, he became angry and refused to have a hint given to the Press to limit themselves to “ Bulgaromachos ” which would be rather less bloodthirsty than Slayer of Bulgarians.

His Bulgarophobia was still rampant the day I beseeched him to display a little more amiability towards poor Passaroff, who was doing his utmost to conciliate the King’s good graces and who, I knew, was to be present that same evening at the reception to be held at the Russian Legation after the dinner in Their Majesties’ honour. For some days past I had been having some semi-official conversations with the Bulgarian Minister with a view to bringing about an amelioration in the condition of some of our unfortunate compatriots who were still under the hated yoke, and to securing the return to the Hellenic communities of certain of our churches, then under Bulgarian control. I had led Passaroff to believe that this would afford pleasure to the King, and I was pretty sure that he, Passaroff, would be only too glad to oblige the King and to make things comfortable for himself at Court. I accordingly asked the King to devote

a little extra time to him that evening so that I could bring my plans to maturity. The King jokingly replied :

“I can't stand this Passaroff of yours ; I won't even shake hands with him.”

Nevertheless, I was pleased to see the King playing his part quite tolerably at the Demidoffs'.

Alas, these sentiments publicly blazoned forth and officially announced to the civilized world at the time of the atrocities committed by the Bulgarians at Doxato and elsewhere, during the war of 1913 (in his telegram to the Powers the King referred to the Bulgarians as beasts with human faces)—these sentiments were soon to be modified under pressure from his Imperial brother-in-law.

In the summer of 1915, during the King's stay at Tatoi, whither he had just been removed to recuperate after his illness, the Queen one morning requested John Théotoky, her Court Chamberlain, to telephone to me immediately to find out whether the telegram congratulating the King on his convalescence and signed “ Ferdinand,” which I had sent on to His Majesty a few days before, was from the King of Rumania or the King of Bulgaria. The Queen had mislaid the telegram before a reply had been sent. Great was her disappointment when I informed her that the congratulations came from His Majesty King Ferdinand of Rumania. What a terrible misfortune it was for her not to have even this pretext for telegraphing a few nice words to her beloved Ferdinand, the good, kind-hearted King of Bulgaria. It would have been such an

excellent opportunity to cultivate friendly relations with him. However, Queen Sophia made it up to the representative of Ferdinand of Bulgaria by entertaining him to dinner from time to time at Tatoi on terms of the most perfect friendliness.

As to King Constantine, his relations with the now contented Passaroff became so close as to lead him to make a complete confidant of the Bulgarian. These confidences were of such a nature that I am reluctant to record them here.*

A few months later it was my fate to be accused of a lack of respect, almost of *lèse-majesté* towards the King because I had dared to speak my mind a little plainly to this same Bulgarian Minister.

All this tends to substantiate what I have been saying regarding the King's attitude and sentiments at the outbreak of war. Without wishing to defend or excuse him, I shall always retain the conviction that Constantine would have marched with the Allies had they only known at the outset how to deal with him.

The following anecdote will show how favourably disposed all the Princes and Princesses were towards the Allies, though their attitude subsequently underwent a radical change.

* In Passaroff's report to his Government, dated 24th September, 1915, the King is represented as saying :

" I beg to inform your King that I shall offer no objection to your attack on Serbia. We are not going to shed our blood fighting against you and Germany in order to save Serbia."

Passaroff states : " Finally the King requested me to help him in his struggle against Veniselos, with a view to ' getting him out of the way quietly.' His Majesty asked me to keep the matter absolutely secret."

During the month of September, 1914, my brother-in-law, Hector Romano, Court Chamberlain to His Royal Highness Prince Nicolas of Greece, the King's brother, was entertaining Their Royal Highnesses to tea at his house. All the Princes and Princesses and several dignitaries of the Court were present on this occasion. It happened that on that very day Madame Ypsilanti had just arrived from Vienna. As I was chatting with her, I happened to notice a rather common sort of ring on one of her fingers. The aspect of the thing rather struck me, and I asked her if she would let me look at it. It was, as a matter of fact, made of iron, and the only ornament it bore were the two words "Pro Patria" engraved upon it. Madame Ypsilanti explained to me that it was a distinction granted in Austria to every lady who presented her jewellery to the country as a contribution to the expenses of the war.

Princess Ypsilanti is a Hungarian by birth, but a Greek by her marriage with Theodore Ypsilanti, the equerry of the ex-King. Although she came from Austria, a country which, despite the ideas of G. Streit on the subject, has for the last hundred years been invariably hostile to us, I could not refrain from expressing my admiration for a scheme which struck me as so charming and so patriotic. The Grand Duchess Helena, wife of Prince Nicolas, seeing me with the ring in my hand, inquired what it was. I passed it on to her with a few words of explanation. Scarcely had I finished, when Her Royal Highness, with a gesture as sudden as it was haughty, handed the ring back to me, almost

turning her back upon me the better to display her indignation that I should have, in her presence, dared to admire anything German. I could not suppress a movement of surprise at this insult, which was directed especially at Madame Ypsilanti. Princess Alice of Battenberg, the wife of the King's third brother, Prince André, the Crown Prince and the Princes Nicolas and Christopher all observed the incident and came and asked me what had happened. I proceeded to give them a brief account of the matter, and in the meantime Princess Alice, who had taken the ring, was examining it with curiosity. When Her Royal Highness perceived what it was, she also gave a little movement of indignation and disgust, though the display was less violent than that of her sister-in-law. As for the Princes, though they said nothing out of consideration for Madame Ypsilanti, they all seemed to share the indignation of the two Princesses. I turned to Madame Ypsilanti to apologize for having involuntarily been the cause of these untoward incidents and to try to modify to some extent the Chauvinist attitude so unjustifiably assumed by the Royal Family. As may be readily imagined, she was in a great state and absolutely inconsolable at the idea that, because of her, her husband might very possibly be degraded by the King. I undertook to mention the matter myself to His Majesty, and when, in accordance with my promise, I related the incident on the following day to the King, he attached no importance to it.

After the lapse of a little time, Madame Ypsilanti, being an Austrian, became indispensable as an

intermediary between the Greek and German Courts. She made a number of journeys from Athens to Germany, and on the occasion of the regrettable events of December, 1916, it was from her house, which had been transformed into a depot of arms and the Headquarters of the Epistrati, that the dastardly attack took place on the Veniselists and on the house of M. Benachi, the former Mayor of Athens, which was situated exactly opposite. With characteristic German tenacity, Queen Sophia had managed to draw into her net the Russian Grand Duchess and the English Princess, who at the outbreak of the war scornfully referred to the Queen as "the German."

But the principal trait in King Constantine's character—though it only manifested itself latterly, towards the close of his reign and nearly brought irremediable disaster to Greece and the Hellenic cause—was his determination to play the autocrat. He doubtless derived these despotic ideas from his ancestors, the Czars of all the Russias, before whom, less than a century ago, all their subjects had to bow the head in humble obedience. Sentiments which up to then had lain dormant within him, unhappily for humanity were destined to be awakened by the Kaiser.

Even as a child, the ex-King would sometimes fly into a temper when playing with his brother George and insist on having his own way because he was the Crown Prince. These childish quarrels, however, were of no importance, and peace was soon restored. There was at that time no hint,

no sign, of what these tendencies were destined to become in after years. Nevertheless, his father, the late King George I., was under no illusions as to his heir's real character. He had often confided his misgivings to his intimate friends. He had frequently expressed the fear that Constantine, when he came to the throne, would stir up civil war by his violence and self-will. It was, doubtless, these apprehensions which inspired the noble political testament which King George left to his son. Therein he laid down a most admirable rule of conduct, and gave him valuable advice against the day when he should be called upon to assume the crown. Unhappily, the new King paid no heed to counsels which were characterized at once by paternal affection and subtle political wisdom, and which conclusively show what a thorough insight the King had gained into the Hellenic spirit. I once ventured to tell King Constantine—I forget what the occasion was—that he would do well to have these maxims of his Royal father inscribed in letters of gold and hung up over his bed, so that he might read them every morning when he awoke. Had he done so, he would have assuredly been on his throne to-day. Had he observed his father's precepts, he would have escaped the snare of those autocratic tendencies which the sinister and medieval suggestions of his Imperial brother-in-law and the pernicious advice of evil counsellors awakened in his mind.

King George I. was not the only one to read into the future of his son and to entertain misgivings regarding the destinies of Greece. The Prince of

Saxe-Meiningen, the Kaiser's brother-in-law, had a deep-seated antipathy to Constantine. Once, when he was on the Riviera, His Highness fell in with a Greek, Monsieur P. D.—this was long before Constantine came to the throne. The Prince had a great love of Greece and a special fondness for everything that had to do with ancient art. He remained a long time in conversation with M. D., and told him how he would like to visit Greece more often but that he was prevented by his antipathy towards the then Crown Prince of Greece, an antipathy which amounted to positive detestation. By way of peroration he wound up by saying: "I hope, for the sake of Greece, that Constantine's succession to the throne will be delayed as many years as possible, for with a temperament like his, it will spell misfortune for the country."

When, in 1909, I had the honour to be presented to M. Veniselos at Kifissia and spoke to him about the Royal Family, to which I had always been devoted, he made the following remark to me concerning the ex-King, who was then still Crown Prince:

"By his self-will he will one day be the cause of much good or of much ill to his country."

And, indeed, if he had chosen the right path, he would have brought glory and happiness to Greece.

As far as I am concerned, I must confess that I was completely deceived regarding the King's character, especially with respect to those despotic tendencies which revealed themselves so suddenly. I had long been aware of King George's apprehensions, but I could not account for them and I

regarded them as wholly unfounded. Constantine had always appeared to me the very opposite to an autocrat. And it would have been remarkable had I thought otherwise.

One day, when he had succeeded to the throne, I begged him to tackle one of his ministers on the subject of an amendment which my experience told me it would be well to introduce into a certain bill then under consideration. The King was almost scared, and protested that I really seemed to be overlooking the fact that he was a constitutional monarch—this was in 1914—and that he would never allow himself to give the smallest advice to his ministers. I stuck to my guns, and at length succeeded in persuading him to let me convey a word *viva voce* to the minister myself, being quite prepared, if the minister took umbrage, to let the King throw me over. Not only did the minister not take it amiss, as the King was so afraid he would, but he was enthusiastic about the matter, and begged me, with almost lyrical protestations of loyalty, to convey to the King his admiration and gratitude for the interest evinced by His Majesty in all matters.

We were then a long way off the time when Gounaris and certain of his colleagues kept rushing off to the Palace every moment to consult the King and to ask his guidance about even the most pettifogging little matters that happened to crop up in their departments.

Yes, Constantine did not stand revealed as an autocrat until the Great War was in progress, and then it came about suddenly, between one

day and the next, immediately after M. Veniselos was dismissed from office in the beginning of 1915. This proves that M. Veniselos was the only one who could impose his will upon the King, and that none of those Prime Ministers who were appointed by the new autocrat, and who only saw in their master's tendencies a sure means of making him fall out for ever with the leader of the liberal party, exercised any influence over him. Those who succeeded M. Veniselos knew, it is true, how to exploit these sentiments, and they were backed up by the Queen, who completely disregarded the power she was able to exert over the King, until the day came when the weakness of his character, his daily increasing hatred of M. Veniselos, and, above all, the policy of the Entente, made her feel that the moment for action had arrived. Then, like the good German she was, she took advantage of the situation, with what success—for the Germans, Bulgarians and Turks—we know, alas ! too well.

Nevertheless, in spite of his despotic ideas, the King sometimes permitted a freedom of conduct towards himself and the Royal Family that was the reverse of good taste ; yet, on occasion, none knew better than he how to establish between himself and others that respectful distance that should never have ceased to exist. Moreover, he always had a high appreciation of those who never, under any circumstances, suffered themselves to depart from the canons of seemly and dignified behaviour.

Thus, on one occasion, he was to give an audience

to a certain minister who had already been waiting a considerable time. I had noticed his arrival as I myself was entering the King's chamber. I was about to leave the room, having expedited the dispatch of current business so far as I was able, in order that the minister should not be kept waiting longer than was necessary, when His Majesty bade me remain yet another minute or two. I thought it my duty to tell him that the minister had already been waiting a long time, but he insisted, saying :

“ Never mind about that. Stop a minute or two while I finish my cigarette.”

On my betraying surprise that he should keep the minister waiting for such a reason as that, he said by way of explanation :

“ I am afraid it might look too familiar if I smoked while he was here. That sort of thing doesn't do.”

I confess I thought there was rather too much of the pre-French Revolution King about that.

Talking of cigarettes, my mind goes back to a day in the year 1913. It was when the 2nd Division came back after the glorious Bulgarian campaign. Queen Sophia was there in her carriage close by the Avenue Kifissia waiting to see the Division at the head of which the King had made up his mind to ride. In the same spot, a little distance away, was General Villaret, Chief of the French Military Mission to Greece, surrounded by his staff. While waiting for the march past, the general had lit a cigarette. Although the distance between him and the Royal carriage was more than respectful, Her Majesty was very indignant, and, summoning

one of the King's aide-de-camps, ordered him to go and tell the French general to cease smoking. The unlucky aide-de-camp had never been in such a quandary. He pretended to obey, and approached the general, but, naturally enough, forbore to deliver the message. I should most certainly have done likewise.

To return to the King, I must add that, side by side with this dignity, he betrayed certain little meannesses that were unworthy not only of a King but of a gentleman. I remember once that I had a visit from a Court contractor, a big ironmonger in Athens, who had come to complain that the day before, Mademoiselle Condostavlou, the Queen's principal lady-in-waiting, had been to his shop to tell him that the King had given orders that nothing more was to be bought at his shop for the Palace because he was a Veniselist. Although I was quite convinced of the truth of the story, I told the good fellow that he must be wrong, and that the King would certainly not bother himself about a lot of saucepans and things. I referred the matter to the King, who did not deny that he really had issued the order so as to have a hit at "that Veniselist *canaille*."

"Sir," I said, as though I had not heard his reply, "I told the man I was certain you had not given such an order. It must be an invention of Mademoiselle Condostavlou." The King said no more, and I passed on to another subject.

In this rapid sketch of the ex-King's character I must not omit to mention at least one good quality

that he possessed. He was very kind-hearted. His compassion was easily stirred; he was very sensitive to the sufferings of others, and he never refused a pension or other assistance to persons in misfortune who made application for assistance through me. He even granted more than what was asked for, nearly every time I presented such petitions, with the not infrequent result that the Court Treasurer would protest that, if things went on at that rate, the resources of the Civil List would soon be exhausted. I may add that until the day when he went back on his own word, he had a respect, nay, I should say a sacred regard, for a promise given.

I do not think I should be transgressing the bounds of truth if I said that what brought about King Constantine's downfall and all but involved his country in disaster, was his entire lack of moral training. That side of his education had been completely overlooked. As a young man he had studied pretty thoroughly so far as merely mental and intellectual training was concerned, but no one had ever undertaken to cultivate his good tendencies or to counteract his evil ones, no one, in a word, had paid any attention to his moral development. To do so would not have been difficult. The King is intelligent, and at bottom, as I have already remarked, he was a good sort of man, but apparently it is a difficult matter for professors and tutors of princes to tell the plain truth to their Royal charges. Possibly this explains why there is always some reluctance to point the moral of

past events and to inculcate those lessons and warnings in which history abounds. I have frequently observed the profound ignorance of our princes regarding the history of the French Revolution, which should form the basis of all teaching where monarchs are concerned. It really would seem that there is something morally enervating in the atmosphere of a court, a sort of miasma in the air that renders it favourable only to the growth of sycophancy and servility, something that deprives those who breathe it of all independence of spirit. And, besides this, there are always present the incentives of ambition and self-interest. Exceptions to this rule are very rare. A man must either be unusually poor-spirited or unusually courageous to live long at court, for you are conscious that you are surrounded by numberless rivals, moving like reptiles in a sort of dim penumbra, ready to swarm upon you and to profit by the disfavour which your honesty or perhaps an untimely outspokenness may have brought upon you, even though your actions may have been dictated solely by devotion and conscience.

The following passage which I read in some book whose name I have forgotten, seemed so thoroughly to fit in with my own ideas that I copied it out. The words are those of one of the secretaries of Napoleon the Great. My only regret is that I do not know his name.

“After all, the Court is a very strange place. It is invested with a spirit of monopoly which

renders good advice unacceptable unless it emanates from those whose advice is generally bad. Supposing you go and try to open the eyes of those who see not ; you are a schemer, you want to get credit for trumped-up revelations, you want to awaken apprehensions, when you well know that princes ought to be lulled to sleep with false tales of security. And so you are shown the door.

“It is, as they say, a grace inborn for the highly placed and highly favoured to appear indifferent when you desire to tell them something they don't know, for the reason that these gentry are supposed to be omniscient. ‘Never mind that fellow,’ they say, ‘he's always wanting to give advice ; he's a fault-finder, a malcontent, a hanger-on ; don't listen to him.’”

I don't know whether it was the same person who delivered himself of these other truths which I find set down among my notes :

“Kings are everywhere surrounded by slaves who cover up the truth because they have too much to lose by revealing it. The reason Kings do not like the truth is because they almost always act in such a way as to make them dread it. In order not to be afraid of the truth a man must be virtuous, act openly, and have a clear conscience.”

Now that I am on the subject of quotations, I may, perhaps, be allowed, apropos of royalty, to quote something much more ancient, the words of a celebrated Greek philosopher, Æsop to wit. Æsop once said to a famous contemporary of his,

Solon, the Lawgiver: "Never approach a king, or if you do, give him nothing but flattery." Whereat Solon replied: "Say rather, 'Never approach a king, or if you do, tell him only what is salutary.'"

If every king would read and meditate upon these words, what a good thing it would be not only for them, but for the people whose destinies they control.

I remember, however, that more than thirty years ago, when I was about to be appointed secretary to the King, then Crown Prince, my friend R., who was employed at the palace at that time, advised me to be sure and never say "no" to anything a prince said, and, most important of all, never to reveal my own thoughts if I wished to succeed at Court.

I was absolutely taken aback at such an outlook and at such advice, though it was given in all sincerity and solely in my interest. The same evening, while I was playing Bridge with His Royal Highness, I found occasion to repeat what I had been told, of course without betraying my adviser's name, and I added that, in the circumstances, I should prefer to remain simply the Prince's friend (as he himself had styled me), and to preserve the right of always speaking the truth, rather than to enter his service and to be perpetually under the necessity of dissembling. I must say to Prince Constantine's honour that he broke out into a veritable storm of indignation against the man who had given such evil counsel, and insisted on knowing his name in order to dismiss him. Of course I did not accede to his demand, but does not the incident suffice to prove the Prince's good

disposition? Truth compels me to say that, despite what certain people think on the matter, Constantine, although he would sometimes pull a wry face at hard or unpalatable truths, was, nevertheless, disposed to look favourably upon those who spoke to him with frankness and sincerity. Constantine might have become a good king, nay, and I cannot too often repeat it, he might have become a truly great king, had he only consented to follow the advice of his great minister.

Really King Constantine remained a child all his life. In his young days he was perpetually surrounded by people who, if not maleficent, were, at all events, nonentities. When we were all young together and used to meet at King George's palace every day, I never heard a single serious or interesting subject discussed by the princes, or the people who formed their customary entourage. All that these rival sycophants thought about was to see who could pick up the greatest quantity of scandal and tittle-tattle to serve up for the delectation of Their Royal Highnesses. It was sometimes really sickening. When Princess Sophia came to Athens as Crown Princess, she shut her door—to her honour be it said—in the faces of these idle companions. To continue to see them, her august spouse was obliged to meet them at the Old Palace.

It has often been stated, and especially in the French Press, that the King had received a thoroughly German education; this is absolutely incorrect. After he passed through the Ecole Militaire at Athens, the Crown Prince Constantine

did, it is true, go to Berlin to complete his training at the War Academy. There could be no question as to the superiority of German military science, but that was the sum total of the matter. It is not true that Constantine was influenced by German ideas in his youth. I think I may go so far as to say that the King loved France and England, though it must be confessed that there was nothing in his subsequent conduct of a nature to prove that he entertained these sentiments.

The German hold on him, or, rather, the personal influence of the Kaiser, did not become manifest until much later, after the Balkan war, when he gave him the ill-fated baton of a German Marshal.

Apropos of this baton, I must here make mention of a matter that is practically unknown. It is that the notorious speech which was ascribed to the ex-King when he went to Potsdam after the wars of 1912-1913, the speech which gave such justifiable offence to French susceptibilities, inasmuch as it made King Constantine attribute the success of our arms to German military methods, whereas in point of fact the training of our army had been due to the excellent French officers who were members of the military mission in Greece ; this speech, I say, was never delivered by the ex-King at all. His Majesty, who, moreover, never was an orator, on receiving the Marshal's baton from the Emperor's hands, spoke simply a few words of thanks, and concluded by remarking that he could never forget that he had completed his military studies in Germany. Up to that point there was nothing save what was quite courteous towards the Germans,

and nothing that could give any offence to the French, but the same day, when the King was dressing for dinner with the Kaiser, an officer came from the latter and brought with him a type-written paper containing a long speech drawn up in a spirit manifestly hostile to France, in the usual Prussian style. The King glanced over the paper, while the orderly officer asked him in a tone of deferential command (for in reality it was the Emperor who was putting the question) whether it was what His Majesty had said.

One day while I was walking in the garden with the King and was reproaching him with having spoken words that were as imprudent as they were undiplomatic, he denied that he had uttered them, and told me the story which I have given above, adding :

“ The paper which was brought to me contained nothing of what I had said, but as it was the Kaiser who sent it, and as I was his guest and he had just conferred upon me a great honour, could I repudiate it without a breach of politeness ? ”

The shot went home, public opinion in France was deeply stirred ; the whole French Press made a violent attack on the King, and showered invectives upon a monarch who became henceforth, for them, merely the brother-in-law of the hated Kaiser ; in a word, King Constantine became an enemy of France, although afterwards it came to my knowledge that the French had been, at that very moment, preparing to give him a triumphal reception in Paris, a project that was swiftly abandoned after his supposed Potsdam speech. The

Greek minister in Paris hastened to acquaint him with the unfriendly feelings entertained towards him in France, and the King, instead of having a splendid reception in broad daylight, arrived in Paris incognito, left the station by a side exit and entered his hotel by a back door.

In writing the above, I am not in the least trying to find excuses for the King. My sole aim is to make known the truth. Constantine's subsequent conduct was not that of a king, least of all that of a king of Greece. He sacrificed his country in order to satisfy his feelings of animosity against France and his detestation of Veniselos, who was a friend to France. In my opinion his hatred of M. Veniselos was even greater than the feelings of gratitude and admiration he entertained for the Kaiser.

This incident, which, from every point of view, was so regrettable, leads me to mention that His Majesty invariably failed to realize the importance that necessarily attaches to the public utterances of a monarch. When, as unfortunately happened only too often, I had occasion to reproach him with having used words which ought never to have been uttered, he always answered naïvely :

“What then, are you superior to me, since you can say what you like and since you tell me that I cannot do so ?”

When I upbraided him for having handed over the copy of his alleged speech at Potsdam to the Kaiser's officer without so much as a protest, he said to me :

“How was I to suppose then that the thing would be telegraphed all over Europe ?”—a speech

which proves his modesty, but which also displays his total ignorance of German methods.

When I left the King's service, several people, taking it that I had no longer any reasons for discretion, put certain questions to me concerning my former master to which I will, at all events in part, here make answer.

The story got abroad that in the course of a stormy discussion with the King, in which she was heatedly espousing the Kaiser's cause, Queen Sophia stabbed him in the chest with a dagger, and that the King's grave illness was really caused by that. The story is entirely without foundation, an absolute fabrication, by whom imagined I know not. The Queen, as a matter of fact, nursed the King with the most praiseworthy devotion.

I have also been questioned regarding the King's alleged habits of intemperance. Several people whose word is to be relied on have told me that they often noticed the King in a condition in which no gentleman, certainly no sovereign, should allow himself to be seen. I owe it to the truth to say that during the forty years in which I was brought into daily contact with him I never once saw him in such a state. What the clique who afterwards gathered round him made of the King I am, of course, unable to say.

Another question which for a time was eagerly discussed by the public was the assassination of King George I. at Salonica on the 5th March, 1913. At that date I happened to be on the Epirus front during the campaign against the Turks, and I was

unable to obtain any precise information in regard to the matter. Moreover, none of the real facts were ever ascertained, since, contrary to all anticipation, no proper inquiry into the affair was ever instituted, while the assassin, or, to speak more correctly, the tool of the real assassins, committed suicide, so it was said, by throwing himself out of a fourth-floor window, before his examination was completed. All I am able to say about the matter is, that when I hinted one day that the time had at length arrived for some light to be thrown on a crime which bore so fatally not only on the Greek cause but on the progress of the Great War, I had a sort of consciousness that my intervention was looked upon in certain quarters as ill-timed. I also broached the matter to my lamented friend, Colonel Frangoudis, who was then aide-de-camp to King George I. and subsequently to Constantine. He was the only eye-witness, since he was with the King on the day of the crime and received him in his arms as he fell back mortally stricken. I suggested that he should draw up a detailed report, but he told me it would be useless, because when, after the murder, he placed himself at the disposal of the judicial authorities at Salonica in order that his evidence might be taken, he was informed, to his great astonishment, that he was not required, and the next day his amazement was still further augmented when he received orders to leave Salonica and betake himself to Athens. And when a year later I called for a report, if only, as I said, to throw light on a piece of obscure history, Colonel Frangoudis, although he was the King's aide-de-camp

and exempt from all other duties, was sent by General Dousmanis on a mission to America, where he died shortly afterwards, after expressing his ardent desire to return to Greece. He also was of the party who, at the outbreak of war, thought that without any possible doubt we should order our conduct in conformity with the behests of the Entente. Thus it came about that the public were never able to get at the facts concerning the assassination of the late King.

Sometimes, when I saw the King's attitude and took stock of all that had been going on around me since the outbreak of the Great War, I confess that I often asked myself whether the King had ever really loved Greece, and, unhappily, I was often compelled to answer this question of mine in the negative. As for his people, they not only loved their King, they idolized him. It will be unanimously admitted by all who knew him that the King's attitude and demeanour were sympathetic. Yet it is none the less true that in the whole course of his career Constantine never succeeded in doing or saying anything calculated to excite the affections of his people; in short, he never succeeded in attracting popularity to himself by enacting one of those impressive deeds that are sure to arouse the enthusiasm and inspire the devotion of the populace. The majority, or I should say, the great mass of the people, regarded him with affection because he was born in Greece, and because he bore the fateful name of the last Byzantine Emperor of glorious memory, who was slain while defending

his last stronghold against the Turks. Then again, the Hellenic people are aristocratic *par excellence*. When I say "aristocratic," I use the epithet in its purely Greek sense, a sense wholly untainted with the signification that foreign "snobbishness" has imparted to the word. In ancient Greece the Republic even was aristocratic, since it placed at the head of the Government all who possessed qualities marked by what was *ἀριστον*, or of outstanding excellence. Finally, the King was adored because he was a king, and because it is popularly held that in order to be a king, a man must be perfect. Alas, how wide of the truth is that, and when King Constantine failed in his duty, the masses, with that instinct which is not seldom characteristic of crowds, withdrew their affection !

Then, again, are not sovereigns often indebted for the affection shown them by their subjects, to the devoted and unremitting labours of those who work for them. How often have kings merely harvested the grain sown for them by others. At the risk, then, of appearing egoistic I can affirm, and I know it cannot be gainsaid even by the King himself, that I never left a stone unturned to increase his popularity. I invariably hastened to give effect to all petitions addressed to His Majesty. During my tenure of office at the Court I had so acted that the King had come to be regarded as a sort of Providence. When I suggested to His Majesty that he should become godfather to the eighth child in every Greek family, the King replied, with a laugh :

"Evidently you want to give me a first-rate advertisement."

Whereto I always made reply: "Believe me, sir, you may very likely stand in need of it before long."

And it is really the fact that by this means I created for him in many hearts a devoted loyalty that nothing could destroy, and it was all the better for the birth-rate in Greece.


In our country, the bond between godfathers and their godchildren is, so to speak, indissoluble. A man would give his life for his godfather. It is a principle on which deputies rely to make sure of the votes of whole families. Yes, I am obliged to confess to my fellow country-women that I speculated on the affection inspired by Royalty in Greece as a means of prompting them to give plenty of soldiers to the country. If certain mothers have a grievance against me in consequence, others I am sure feel nothing but gratitude.

Notwithstanding all this, three years later saw the King without a throne, unsupported by a single one of his co-godfathers, despite the thunderbolt with which M. Zaimis, then Prime Minister, had threatened in June, 1917, to overwhelm M. Jonnart.

The adoration with which the King was regarded in some quarters did not prevent his being execrated in others. One day I had a furious letter from a student at the University of Athens, who wrote direct to the King in the name of a whole group of fellow *alumni*. They charged him with betraying his country, and the language employed was, to put it mildly, menacing and violent. The young man had bravely added his signature to the

letter, and had even given his address. If the King had opened that letter, as he might well have done, since he sometimes amused himself by opening the letters which arrived during my absence from the palace, it would have gone hard with that unhappy student. The brave youth said in his letter that he knew well enough the fate that awaited him, but that his conscience compelled him to make known to his sovereign the feelings of the majority of the students, who demanded that the King should bring the country into the war on the side of the Allies.

Next morning, quite early, I sent one of the palace gendarmes to seek out the young man, without, of course, assigning any reason for the summons. He brought him before me pale and deeply moved. He thought, no doubt, that he would go straight from the palace to the prison. He was quite wrong. I showed him his letter and asked whether he had written it. I felt a great longing at that moment to press his hand and congratulate him on the patriotic enthusiasm that had prompted so wild a deed. However, I merely spoke to him in a fatherly manner, endeavouring to give some colour of justification to the King's conduct. And then I did what my conscience dictated in order to allay, without extinguishing, the ardour of these gallant young fellows. I then told him that fortunately it was I who had opened the letter, that the King knew nothing about it, and then I handed it back to him. When I told him that that was all I had to say to him and that he was free to depart, his emotion bore eloquent testimony to his gratitude.



I felt that that day I had done the King a service. I am sure that if he or one of my colleagues had opened a letter of that kind, the unhappy creature who wrote it would have still been languishing in prison for having committed the crime of *lèse-majesté*, and certainly his comrades would have done everything in their power to avenge him.

Queen Sophia never had any love for Greece, her adopted country. She never missed an opportunity of saying anything offensive about us, even to her own children. "*Vous autres Héliènes,*" was an expression she used on every occasion, infusing into her pronunciation of it a scorn that was truly revolting and which one must have been very servile not to have protested against.

Latterly, during the war, she had made it a custom to nominate as members of the committees with which she was connected women of German birth married to Greeks, and it was these ladies to whom she almost invariably addressed her remarks, and in German to boot, asking them to translate her words into French for the benefit of any Greek ladies who did not know German. I confess that had I been in my countrywomen's place, I would have resigned rather than hear my Queen speaking a language other than my own, or than French, which is the universal language.

For a long time Queen Sophia had never meddled with politics. May I be allowed, in support of my statement, to relate a fact that will prove how little the Queen expected, when the war broke out, to play a part so sinister and so preponderating,



THE EX-QUEEN OF GREECE.

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at least so far as Greece was concerned, as the rôle she subsequently assumed.

It was at the beginning of August, 1914. She had only just got back to Athens from a visit to Germany, where the declaration of war had taken her by surprise. She had, indeed, been rather roughly handled by the German populace, who, not recognizing her when she went to Kiel on a visit to her brother, Prince Henry of Prussia, had taken her and her suite for a Russian banker's family, who had been reported by the police to be attempting to get to the frontier with all their many millions. The carriages were frequently brought to a standstill, pistols levelled at the Queen and her lady-in-waiting, bayonets thrust threateningly right into their faces. The unfortunate Mademoiselle Condostavlou was very irreverently accused—horrible calumny—of wearing a wig and of being a man masquerading as a woman. An angry crowd insisted on conducting the party to the police station, despite the Imperial livery of the grooms and the protests of the Kaiser's sister, whom the unruly mob regarded as an impostor. The same scene was enacted twice in two different localities, and, of course, on each occasion the Queen's identity was recognized before anything really serious occurred.

I must here pay a tribute to our ex-Queen, who, according to what was told me by one of the officials of her household, displayed admirable coolness on the occasion of this eventful journey.

To continue the narrative. I don't know whether that evening at Tatoi the Queen was still thinking

of the ungentle manner in which she had been dealt with, and whether, in consequence, she still nourished a little ill-feeling against her countrymen on account of their brutality, but these are the facts of the case. The King's aides-de-camp were commenting during dinner on the first Allied successes and did not conceal their satisfaction. Suddenly, however, it dawned on them, or on one of them, that the subject could not be anything but distasteful and painful to a Hohenzollern's ears. He, therefore, gave his friend a kick under the table to induce him to change the conversation. The Queen did not fail to notice the circumstance, and readily divined the cause, for she said in her usual slow and monotonous little voice :

“ Pray, gentlemen, do not put yourselves out. I never forget that I am Queen of Greece first and a German princess next.”

This truly royal utterance was reported to me by the aide-de-camp who accompanied the King next day to the city. He gave it me word for word, describing the whole scene and saying how awkward they had all felt despite the Queen's graciousness. When next I found myself with the King, I asked him to confirm the words I had heard attributed to the Queen. He replied :

“ Yes, that is quite correct, but why do you ask ? ” I took the opportunity to tell His Majesty how deeply sensible we all were of the delicate and indeed difficult position in which the Queen was necessarily placed in an atmosphere frankly hostile to Germany and in a country entirely devoted to France and England. It was for this reason that I was anxious

to give public currency to the Queen's words, inasmuch as they afforded conspicuous proof that she knew how to sacrifice her private feelings to her obligations as a sovereign. But how profound was the change that followed! Queen Sophia completely forgot that she was Queen of the Greeks. She bethought herself only of the fact that she was a German, and the Kaiser's sister into the bargain. She remembered her duty as a princess of Germany, she forgot her duty as a Queen.

Nevertheless, it is possible that she might have remained loyal to her real duty had she observed a similar loyalty in those about her.

Yes, the change was complete. A certain number of people, including the entire Court, became so undisguisedly hostile to the Entente that they openly expressed the hope that the Germans would carry the day.

Nevertheless, the words used by the Queen that day afford yet a further proof that when war broke out nobody, and I say it deliberately—nobody in Greece, with one or two rare exceptions, was favourable to the German cause, and that even the German Emperor's sister was either unable or unwilling to believe that she was soon to become one of the principal factors in the change that was destined to come to pass.

It cannot, however, be denied that Queen Sophia was possessed of some great qualities. She had an iron will. It was she to whom we are indebted for the clearance of the encumbrances that disfigured the approaches to the Stadium, and she it

was who succeeded in bringing about the demolition of a hideous and massive panorama erected in 1896 for the Olympic Games of that year. Since that date no Government had succeeded in getting it pulled down owing to the influence brought to bear by certain powerful interests. The removal of the Anglican cemetery which, for more than fifty years, occupied one of the finest sites of the Zappeion on the banks of the Ilissus is also due to her. One cannot but record one's gratitude to Queen Sophia for all these improvements. Her Majesty simply worshipped order. The internal arrangements of her palace were perfection itself, and excellent housewife that she was, she gave her personal attention to the ordering of every detail. This same orderly spirit, this same practical instinct for organization and discipline was applied by her in connection with all the various charitable undertakings on which she conferred her patronage. Furthermore, it is to the ex-Queen that we owe the re-forestation of several parts of Attica, for she also adored trees; she even desired to have trees planted on the Acropolis, a proposal which rather shocked some people.

I have spoken of the Queen's love of order as being almost a religion with her. That leads me to make mention of her religion proper, which she exchanged almost immediately on her arrival in Greece for our Catholic Orthodox faith. No one had requested or even suggested that she should take this step. That she did so was exclusively due to her mother-in-law, Queen Olga,

Grand Duchess of Russia. George I. was King of Greece for fifty years, and he always remained a staunch Protestant. He had a chapel of his own in the palace, and no one ever criticized him adversely. Our constitution permits complete religious freedom.

By thus seeking re-baptism in another faith, the Crown Princess brought on herself a violent rating from her august brother, who, though head of the Hohenzollerns, had not been applied to or even so much as informed of what was to take place. The result was a prolonged disagreement between brother and sister. For several years the Queen never so much as went near Berlin. She used to go and see her mother, the Empress Frederick, at Homburg on her way to Eastbourne, where she always liked to spend the summer. Greece had to pay dearly for the Kaiser's animosity towards the Queen when the war of 1897 broke out ; but of that I will speak elsewhere. So deeply incensed was the Queen with the Kaiser and with Germany in general that she once reprimanded a lady-in-waiting who, thinking to please her, had taken up German, for wasting her time learning such a "dirty language." Having for some time ceased to take pleasure in her own language, the Queen one fine day, when she had made it up with the Emperor, took a violent dislike to French. She said that there wasn't a single French book worth reading.

In this connection I must relate that I once had a visit at the palace from M. Eugène Brissand, who had taught us all French and whom we all loved. He told me all the trouble he was having

with the Queen, who appeared to be offering what seemed like systematic opposition to her children's learning French, by continually cutting down the number of lessons and finally forbidding that they should be given any work to prepare, a decision which pleased them all mightily, for they were born idlers. This explains how it was Their Highnesses did not make much progress in French. I mentioned the matter to the King one day.

"Don't worry yourself about it," he replied, with a laugh; "remember how you used to tease me about my French in the old days. Well, you know, I did not really learn to speak French until I was thirty-seven, and then it only needed a few weeks in Paris. It will be the same with my children."

In point of fact the King knows French thoroughly, though I think that, in addition to the source mentioned, he was indebted for some of his knowledge to certain charming Parisiennes.

The Queen was very strict with the young princes, and wanted to know all their doings, even when they were old enough to have a free hand. None of her children had a real affection for her, and she, on her side, often exhibited great *sécheresse de cœur*. In her, as I have already remarked, it was the practical side that was uppermost.

Even now the Queen continues, so I am told, to refer to His Majesty King Alexander merely as "Prince Alexander," meaning it to be understood thereby that she does not recognize him as King.

Queen Sophia was extraordinarily distant in her manner, but whether this was due to hauteur or shyness is uncertain; I am rather disposed to attribute it chiefly to the latter, though the former may well have been a contributory cause, or she would not have been a true Hohenzollern. When she became Queen her manners were characterized by a still greater reserve, and she seldom went out of her way to speak to anybody. On the other hand, she would sometimes converse at great length with politicians, and especially with financiers. I remember, for example, that, one evening at the Demidoffs', she talked at great length with Jean Valaority, the lamented manager of the Banque Nationale. After Her Majesty had gone, Valaority expressed great admiration for her, and observed that he had been positively taken aback by her extensive acquaintance with matters of which he would never have suspected her of knowing anything.

I cannot conclude these few pages about Queen Sophia without putting on record the gratitude I personally entertain towards her, notwithstanding all that has happened, for the kindly interest she displayed towards us in 1904, when my brother Leon died. Not only did she send the principal nurse of her Children's Hospital to tend him, but Her Majesty (then Crown Princess) sent regularly twice a day to learn how our poor brother was going on. As an example of her practical nature, I would add that when the messenger was sent he went armed with a pencil and a piece of blank paper,

so that the nurse might write down an account of her patient's condition without loss of time. I shall never forget this delicate and kindly interest, and for a long time I positively worshipped her. As a sovereign she would, perhaps, never have found a more loyal and devoted servant than I, had she remained Queen of the Hellenes instead of again becoming a German princess.

After quitting the King's service, I did not, though absent, relinquish my endeavours to persuade him to abandon his unfortunate policy, and I lost no opportunity of bringing to his notice anything I deemed might have a salutary effect upon him.

Thus, happening to be at Kifissia during the summer of 1916 on a few weeks' leave from the Army, I there made the acquaintance of Admiral Palmer, the new chief of the British Naval Mission to Greece. Living in the same hotel, we quickly became close friends, and as he was there alone and as yet knew nobody, I invited him to take his meals at the same table as my son and I. Thus it was that, coming back one evening in August from Tatoi, where he had been received in audience by the King, he told me that His Majesty had been led to speak of me because he knew we were taking our meals together, and that what he had said was of a highly complimentary nature, although he added that I was unfortunately one of those men whose patriotic fervour was so extreme as to pervert their judgment. He also reproached me for wrongfully accusing him of Germanophile sympathies,

though he knew well enough that it was his detestation of M. Veniselos rather than his love of Germany that had formed the gravamen of my complaints against him.

I also remember how shocked the gallant Admiral was when he repeated to me what the King had told him concerning his idea of military discipline. He spoke in terms of admiration of the glamour, the aureole of glory the officers of the . . . Division had won for themselves by coming straight back from Salonica to cast themselves at their sovereign's feet instead of going and putting themselves under the orders of General Sarraill and marching against the hated Bulgarians. Some of them did so later on, and with success, thus regaining the esteem and honour which they had forfeited ; but all the same the theatrical welcome given them by the ex-King and the Government did equal harm to both parties in the eyes of the public.

Apropos of discipline in the army, the King, in order to impress the Admiral and to pose as one thoroughly imbued with the doctrines of the Kaiser, told him the following story.

In Bavaria, during the reign of one of their mad kings (I don't remember which, for they were all more or less insane), the soldiers—and Constantine spoke with great emphasis—had shown such loyalty to their prince, notwithstanding his madness, that they pursued with fixed bayonets the parliamentary commissioners who, as a matter of form, were to announce to the King that, in consequence of his mental deficiency, it had been necessary to appoint a regent. The commissioners were compelled to

flee by underground passages to escape the fury of troops who were loyal—even to a lunatic.

“There,” said Constantine, “that’s what I call military discipline and fidelity to the sovereign. That is the standard to which I mean to bring my army.”

Needless to say, these words faithfully reflected the mentality of the Kaiser’s disciple.

Admiral Palmer, instead of being dazzled by so absurd a theory of discipline, of which, as a British sailor, his conceptions must have been entirely different, answered coldly :

“Frankly, sir, would you care to be King under these conditions ?” That is hardly the sort of answer his predecessor, Kerr, would have given.

A madman, but obeyed because he was a king. There, in this twentieth century, you have the German idea of monarchy. Such are the ideas that the ex-King and his faction were bent on imposing upon Greece.

A few days later, the Admiral was again sent for by the King at Tatoi, and, knowing His Majesty to be in a favourable mood, I took the opportunity to send him a final piece of advice in the form of a letter to the Admiral. I heard from the latter that same evening that the King had read my letter through and had again spoken very kindly about me, notwithstanding a few home truths that I had set down in my letter, which, after all, bore no fruit.

A few days previously the King had received a much graver and more weighty warning, and, withal, a public one, from M. Veniselos. I will deal with that later on.

Unhappily the King would listen to no arguments. Three weeks later, M. Veniselos carried out his *coup d'état*, and we left with him for Crete, where he set up the Provisional Government, with Admiral Coundouriotis and General Danglis. This national movement was the saving of Greece, and enabled us to win back our honour.

I have been informed on good authority that in the summer of 1918, after the brilliant piece of work performed by the Greek troops when they carried the formidable position of Serka di Legen with a dash that won the unqualified admiration of the French troops supporting them, a devoted partisan of the ex-King, then in Switzerland, wrote to him from Athens giving him an excellent piece of advice. He suggested that he should send to his own son, King Alexander, a message of congratulation on the bravery of the Greek army in order, as the letter went on to explain, that he might win back the affections of the army, arouse the sympathy of the people and create an atmosphere favourable to himself by a token of self-denial, of humiliation one might almost say, that would doubtless have raised him in the estimation of everyone.

I have already remarked that King Constantine was incapable of *le beau geste*. The reply given to this devoted supporter, a deputy, was hard and categorical; it merely said that things were going perfectly well with Germany. Of his former army, of the soldiers whose idol he had once been not a word, not even a thought. He even found fault with them because they had put their country's

flag and their country's honour before him. And all this took place but a few days before the Allies' magnificent offensive on the Western front. The dogma of the invincibility of the German arms and his hatred of M. Veniselos rendered him dead to every counsel, blind to every sign.

Apropos of the above letter, I beg leave to mention a letter which I myself wrote him in 1907 with the same object in view when he was in Paris, having been practically driven out from the Army as a consequence of the military rising which took place that year. I made clear to him what he ought to do to win back the sympathies of his future subjects. This rising resulted in his having to forgo all his army commands, and also in the removal of all the other princes, his brothers, from the army lists. Constantine at this period was having the time of his life in Paris, and was assuring more than one of the fair ladies who were assisting him to beguile his time that "he was hanged if he had any very great hankering to be king of that place they called Greece."

One of the first acts performed by M. Veniselos when he came to power was forthwith to restore his command to the future King, as well as to reinstate the princes in their ranks, together with all the emoluments which had fallen due to them during their period of involuntary retirement.

In the course of the Balkan wars the King, carried away by our successes and the popularity no less great than the glory which, without any great merit on his part, had accrued to him, had already forgotten those to whom he was indebted for them.

One day, in the presence of a number of people, he delivered himself of a joke on the suggestion I had ventured to make to him when he was in Paris. By that the ex-King meant to say that his popularity and his prestige had suffered no abatement, and that I had been foolish enough to doubt it and to proffer useless advice. Nevertheless, my doubts were not dispelled.

Whenever I chance to think of the ex-King and his unfortunate vagaries, I cannot help being reminded of the concluding line of an article of M. Gaston Deschamps which appeared in *Le Temps*, and which, somehow or other, came into my hands when I was at the front in February or March, 1916. In this article which, if I remember rightly, was entitled "The Gods of Ancient Greece," the distinguished writer, speaking of kings, concluded his article with a passage whose sad truth was so deeply impressed upon me that it is graven in my memory :

"It is given to every king to speak of his People and his Army, but it is not given to every one to speak of his country."

When, during the Peace Conference, I met Deschamps in Paris, I reminded him of his article, and asked him whether when he wrote those lines he was thinking of Constantine. His smile was sufficient answer to my question, and it told me I was not mistaken.

Nevertheless, it was not good advice that King Constantine lacked. Surrounded by undesirables, hedged about by flatterers, Germanophiles and

anti-Veniselists, isolated by the Queen—all this he may have been, but if he was not able to choose the right path for himself, it was because he was not worthy of his crown, because he had no country to call his own, or at all events because that country was certainly not Greece.

Probably no king ever had a hand so rich in trumps. He simply threw them away.

II

VENISELOS

I DO not claim to present a portrait of President Veniselos. That would require a more ambitious pen than mine; and, moreover, the events are too recent. One thing at least is certain: History will ratify the verdict of his contemporaries who consider him one of the greatest figures of the age, if not the greatest. If I were asked to epitomize his qualities, my answer would be "Patriotism and Loyalty." Add to this loyalty a wide and profound intellect, and you have a man (the breed is rare) who fears nothing because he has nothing to conceal.

I have seen a portrait signed by him and bearing the following motto, written in his hand: "Speak the truth at all times both to King and to People."

This motto sums up in a few words the political life of M. Veniselos, ever since the time of his arrival from Crete in 1910; and he never departed from it.

One of the least known traits of M. Veniselos' character was, beyond all contradiction, his great modesty. He did all the work, seldom rested, and left all the honour to the King, contenting himself

with the moral satisfaction, and bearing the heavy responsibilities which all devolved upon him, and which, like a brave man, he never shirked. And a brave man he was at all times and on every field. In one of his most moving parliamentary speeches he said, very finely : " It is not by turning our backs on danger that we escape it, but by looking it boldly in the face." And this he did on every occasion.

It was about this time that he first addressed the people of Athens. With no party at his back, with no influence, almost unknown to the great mass of the people, he staked that day his whole political future. In his assurance, his firmness, his unbounded confidence in his opinions, he resembled his great ancestor Pericles. To the repeated clamours of the vast multitude demanding the *Constituante*, Veniselos three times replied by a calm and uncompromising refusal, and would consent to nothing more than a revision of the constitution.

That was the first occasion on which M. Veniselos saved the Monarchy in Greece. The people, all-powerful as they were for the time being, had bowed to his will. The people already instinctively saw in him the super-man to whom Greece might entrust her destinies. Ibsen has said that the majority has power, but lacks reason. The Hellenic people of that day showed that it possessed both power and reason.

The following incident will give some idea of M. Veniselos' modesty. In August, 1913, as he was returning from Bucharest, after signing the glorious

treaty which—for the time being—brought the Balkan wars to an end, the newspapers of Salonica had announced, on his arrival there, that he would leave for Athens that same evening. Knowing that King Constantine was also to leave for Athens the *next* day, and that his capital was preparing a triumphal reception for him, this being his first visit since the conclusion of our victorious wars, I confess I was much surprised that the President did not wait to arrive at Athens at the same time as the King.

I was then in hospital at Salonica, having had to undergo an operation after the Bulgarian campaign. On this particular morning I was visited by Prince Nicolas, the King's third brother. He could not find words strong enough to express his opinion of the unworthy conduct of M. Veniselos in thus hurrying to arrive in Athens twenty-four hours before the King, under pretext of having to send to Bucharest, without delay, certain documents necessary to the final ratification of the treaty; but *really*, of course, to forestall the King in taking the honours of the victory. His Royal Highness ran through his whole vocabulary of abuse, and as the news of the President's departure had been confirmed, I could not deny it; but as regards the motives which had led M. Veniselos to hasten his return to Athens, I defended him with all the power of the faith I had in the man.

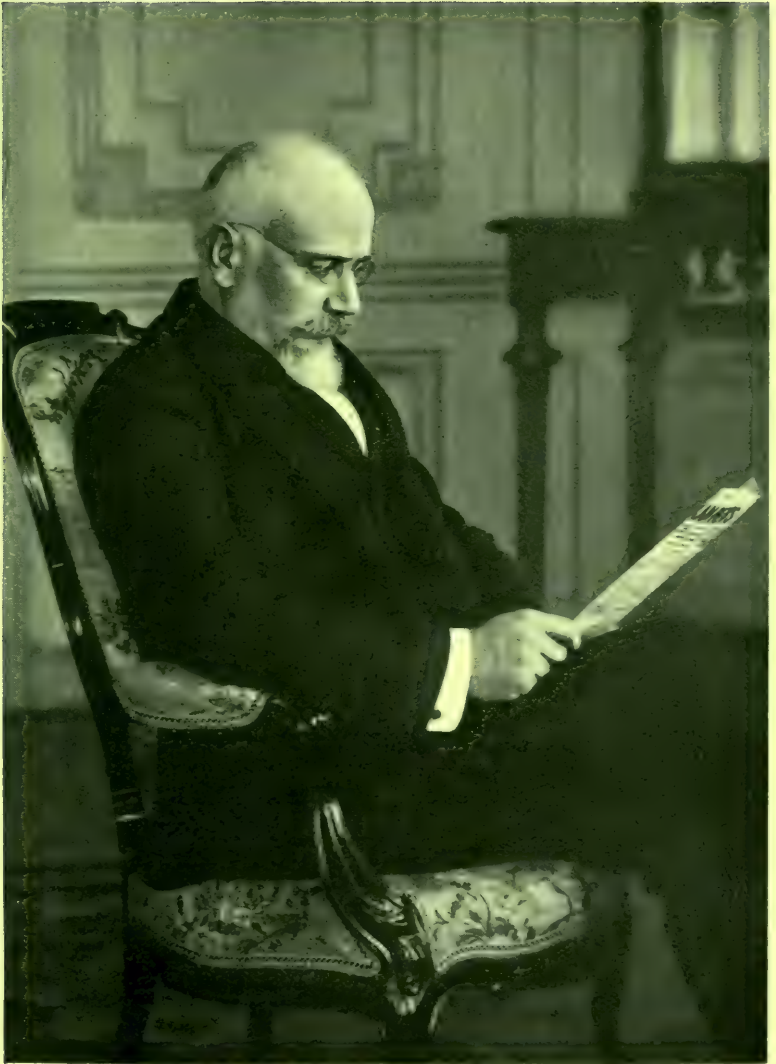
On the afternoon of the same day I was also visited by H.R.H. Prince Alexander, our present King. He was accompanied by the bewitching and mysterious German Countess —, who claimed

to be the Queen's cousin. The Prince also spoke of the President, informing me quite simply of his departure for Athens, which proved to me that the news was a topic of conversation in the Royal household.

As I have just mentioned His Majesty King Alexander, I feel bound to state here that he alone of all the Royal princes has never, from the very first, spoken of M. Veniselos save in terms of respect. Moreover, on the day the young King succeeded his father he is reported to have uttered the following words, which contain his whole programme as a constitutional king.

“ My grandfather reigned over Greece for fifty years because he never interfered with politics. My father did the contrary and did not reign even five years. I intend doing what King George did.”

Meanwhile, what was M. Veniselos doing—he who was so impatient to be at Athens and rob King Constantine of the first fruits of his glory? Instead of landing at Piræus, and in order to *avoid* being the object of an ovation, he landed at the little town of Chalcis, in Eubœa, whence he was conveyed by a special train towards Athens. Nor did the train take him all the way; still for the same reason he stopped at a wayside station called Boyatti, about thirty kilometres from the capital, and was secretly driven to his own home in a motor. He held a secret conference during the night with the chief members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and, without allowing his presence at Athens to be known to anyone else, kept within the four walls of his own house till two o'clock the following after-



M. VENISELOS.

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noon, when King Constantine was due to arrive. The President then went to Phaleron in order to be present at the arrival of his Sovereign, and, as the head of the Government, to give him an official welcome. He then modestly returned to his own residence, leaving the King to enjoy the undivided honour of his triumph.

I learned afterwards that from the moment the Royal yacht weighed anchor at Salonica until she arrived at Phaleron, the King, the Princes, the Staff and the Naval officers had indulged in a chorus of maledictions on the head of the "traitor" Veniselos, whom they all supposed to have made a triumphal entry into Athens the day before.

* Had Constantine been capable of lofty sentiments, here was the opportunity for a *beau geste*. He would have called personally on M. Veniselos, and made the *amende honorable* by frankly apologizing for the petty and unwarranted charges he had made against him. But this *beau geste* was never made. On the contrary, I know that M. Veniselos' modesty, which was such an overwhelming proof of his superiority, was but one cause the more of hatred and jealousy. The King had never read Nietzsche's words: "A noble soul does honour to itself by paying homage to whom homage is due."

If M. Veniselos was modest, Constantine was not—not in the least degree. He loved popular acclamation. Thus, on the 25th March, 1915, a few days after the first removal of M. Veniselos from power, after the meeting of the Crown Council, the King

was to proceed in state to the Cathedral in celebration of the national festival. It was feared that there might be popular demonstrations in favour of the President; it was even feared that these might assume a character of hostility towards the King. M. Veniselos, when this came to his ears, had the tact to refrain from going to the Cathedral. In spite of this, M. Gounaris had taken military precautions of Draconian severity and ridiculous character, to keep the crowd at a distance from the Royal *cortège*. The streets were cleared throughout the whole route—and that on a day of national rejoicing! It was the first time that Athens had witnessed such a proceeding; a proof, if one were needed, of the fear inspired in him by the popularity of his predecessor. The street in which M. Veniselos lived was surrounded by a cordon of troops, although the ex-President had gone to the country for the day and was at that moment quietly sitting at lunch. Moreover, Gounaris had sprinkled the route with men paid to cheer the King as he passed. The cheering, though ordered and paid for (or perhaps *because* of that fact) was, I must say, very thin. Manifestly there had been no enthusiasm; and yet the King was radiant, and said to me on entering the Palace:

“Did you see how they clapped and cheered me? Your fears were perfectly unfounded.”

That same day I jotted down in my diary these simple words: “Woe to the prince who seeks the applause of the crowd.” And in spite of myself, my thoughts strayed towards certain Roman Emperors.

Another fact which stands to the credit of M. Veniselos' modesty will at the same time show the opinion of the Kaiser himself on the policy advocated by that eminent statesman.

Before going to Berlin to convey to the Kaiser the official announcement of the ex-King's accession, M. Theotoky, ex-President of the Council, a man of outstanding intelligence but a confessed Germanophile, had asked the King if he thought it would be well to make overtures to the Imperial Government with a view to a *rapprochement* between Greece and Germany. The ex-King, a constitutional sovereign in those days, replied that he would consult M. Veniselos before giving an answer. The latter categorically refused, and even begged the King to strictly forbid M. Theotoky to do anything whatever in this direction.

M. Theotoky did not abandon his idea, and at an official dinner with the Kaiser, he so completely ignored the injunctions of the King and M. Veniselos as to open a long conversation with the Emperor on the means of securing a closer *rapprochement* with Greece, while General Soutzo, the second Hellenic delegate and a crack shot at game, invited him to come and shoot in Epirus. The Emperor, surprised by these unexpected overtures, cabled to Athens the same evening to his representative and cousin, Count von Quadt-Wykradt-Isny, asking for information, and, judging from what von Quadt told me, reproaching him bitterly for having kept him in the dark concerning the intentions of the Hellenic Government.

On receipt of this telegram, Count von Quadt,

in a state of great agitation, rushed off to see M. Veniselos to ask for an explanation.

The President, even more surprised than he, readily gave him an account of what had happened, assuring him that M. Theotoky's mission was strictly limited to the official announcement of the new King's accession, and nothing beside. At the same time he personally denied responsibility for the action of the ambassador. But no sooner had the German minister gone than the President, unable to believe that Theotoky, with his great reputation for tact, could have made such a blunder, and not unnaturally supposing that the King had given special instructions in spite of his advice and without informing him, hastened to send in his resignation, thoroughly disapproving of this new policy. The King flatly denied having charged M. Theotoky with any mission whatever, and entirely repudiated his act; accordingly M. Veniselos remained in office. As for von Quadt, he lost no time in furnishing Berlin with the explanation that had been given to him, and received in reply from the Kaiser a telegram of apology for the unjust reprimand.

In this telegram the Kaiser said, in effect, that the only possible policy for Greece was that pursued by M. Veniselos in co-operation with England.

The German minister very kindly took the telegram to the President to show him this most flattering appreciation from his lord and master—this was before the war—but M. Veniselos, with his usual modesty, omitted to ask for a copy of it. Fortunately someone else was wise enough to procure

one for him—namely, M. Politis, the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In reference to this incident, in the course of a conversation I had with the King during the war, I took the liberty of remarking that the Kaiser himself had at that time pointed out the path in which his duty and policy lay. Much astonished, the King asked for an explanation, and I related the incident of M. Theotoky's blunder and the Emperor's telegram to his minister. The King knew nothing of the affair, M. Veniselos not having thought it necessary to tell him about it.

The most striking feature of M. Veniselos' character is, as I have already said, loyalty, sometimes even to excess. He has proved it on every occasion, but particularly in his dealings with the Serbs.

So much has been said of our treaty with Serbia, that I may also say a word on that subject. I shall not presume to discuss, or even to mention, the circumstances in which it was signed. The treaty existed, and it was our duty to respect it. Moreover, it is to our interest to be in close union with Serbia, and it was both our interest and our duty to respect a signed treaty. King Constantine himself had recognized that the treaty was not exclusively Balkan in its scope, and went so far as to tell me one day with a frankness which, I confess, amazed me, that he had signed this treaty with a *mental reservation* never to march against Austria, and that he had said as much immediately after the departure of M. Boschkovitch, the representative of Serbia. I am convinced that this was *fanfaronnade*

on the part of Constantine, who wished to vie with his dear brother-in-law by showing that he too, at a pinch, could treat a solemn treaty as a scrap of paper.

M. Veniselos has always advocated the Serbian alliance ; and though Serbia, by her engagements with the Entente, may at times have given some colour to the suspicion that she looked upon the treaty as moribund, M. Veniselos remembered only one thing, namely, that we had abandoned Serbia in her hour of danger and that Gounaris had betrayed her to Bulgaria and Germany. His loyalty to Serbia, carried perhaps rather too far, made him deaf to the prayers of the people of Monastir, and kept him from demanding even a simple rectification of frontiers in the direction of Gheugheli-Doiran, where so much Greek blood was shed in the murderous fighting of September, 1918.

Here, or nowhere, is the place to put on record the admirable reply given by M. Veniselos to one who advised him to march against Serbia : " Greece is too small to commit so great an infamy." He seemed to admit that Might is Right and yet to withhold from Might the qualities of Justice and Loyalty.

For those who have made a god of the ex-King, I will relate the following facts at length, to prove once and for all that it never entered into M. Veniselos' head to overthrow the throne ; which would have been a perfectly easy matter, both on account of his own unbounded popularity, and through the criminal aberrations of a king blinded

by passion. In spite of everything, the President was and remained loyal to the monarchy. His warmest desire was to consolidate it ; but he wanted it to be great, noble and lofty. He wanted the King to be King, and first of all to be a patriot. Constantine consistently refused to understand M. Veniselos, and preferred to credit the perfidious insinuations of his own vile *entourage*, whose one aim was to represent Veniselos as his worst enemy and a dangerous rival.

In this connection, M. Veniselos had, in one of his last conversations with the ex-King, begged His Majesty not to believe the slanders spread broadcast by his political and personal enemies, who said that he designed to establish a republic in Greece. With his usual frankness, M. Veniselos confessed to being convinced that one day Greece would certainly become a republic, but that day, he added, was still remote ; as Greece was not yet ripe for that form of government, which would not be suitable for her for a hundred years to come.

“ But,” he had the courage to add, “ by your strange conduct, sir, you are shortening the time by at least three quarters.”

By “ strange conduct ” I suppose the President was alluding to the King’s intrigues against him, and even more to the autocratic ideas he was beginning to display by his ridiculous theories of divine right of kings—in the twentieth century!—and consequently his idea that by divine inspiration he was better and wiser than any other man.

This, at least, is the explanation I venture to apply to M. Veniselos’ words (which were repeated to me

by the King) ; for this was before the Epistrati had terrorized Athens, and before Rupel, Cavalla and the 4th Army Corps had been betrayed to Bulgaria and Epirus to Italy !

In September, 1916, we cruised the isles of Crete, Samos, Chios and Mitylene, finishing at Salonica ; and time and again, on board the *Hesperia*, I heard M. Veniselos' friends discussing with him the future government of the country, and insisting on the necessity for a republic.

In the most delightful debates, in which the profound learning of M. Philaretos had free rein, the President invariably refuted their arguments, and he defended the monarchy as being indispensable to Greece for many a year to come.

What better proof can be desired of M. Veniselos' unwillingness to overthrow Constantine than his first speech delivered at Canea on the 13th September, 1916, to proclaim the formation of a new government. By this speech he gave Constantine one last chance of putting himself at the head of the national movement ; and he had the courage to say this amidst frantic shouts of " Down with the King ! " which were already being raised by the crowd, and which became more and more violent at each stage of our journey to Salonica, but still failed to shake the conviction of the great patriot.

To remove any doubt that may still linger as to the purity and loyalty of the purposes of this man, who, in the eyes of all of us, stood for the aspirations of Hellenism, I will simply quote the following facts and documents.

By cable of the 30th September, 1916, M. Veniselos

was informed at Canea, through one of the Entente Legations at Athens, that the German military attaché announced that sixteen Austro-German divisions were to arrive in Macedonia immediately, to hurl back Sarrail's army to the sea; and that a certain Colonel Papavassiliou was circulating a list to be signed by all officers under pretence of a renewal of their oath of loyalty to the King. In spite of these menaces, and in order to make sure of the army, M. Diamandides, a former minister and M. Veniselos' representative at Athens, informed him that he had received official information of the visit of a Royal aide-de-camp.

Here is the telegram :

“ Athens,

“ *2nd October, 1916.*

“ Diamandides to President Veniselos, Canea.

“ I have just learned from a sure source of probable negotiations : that M. Romanos,* who with the authority of the King and Government has for two days been engaged in conversations with M. Briand, will to-morrow make the following declaration to the French Government in the event of His Majesty definitely approving of the terms this evening :

“ 1. Greece will immediately declare war on Bulgaria and mobilize at once.

“ 2. War will be declared by a new cabinet possessing the confidence of the Entente.

“ I have also just been informed by the same source that an aide-de-camp of the King will call

* Minister of Greece in Paris.

upon me without delay, in order that I may inform you from His Majesty of the official overtures, so that our party may be represented in the new government by one or by three members.

“ If these overtures are made to me, I shall refuse any discussion or negotiations, and I will give no undertaking whatsoever ; but shall confine myself to replying that I am simply forwarding the proposals to you.

“ The King will probably give his assent this evening to the declarations which M. Romanos will be charged to make to M. Briand to-morrow in the King's name. If I am informed to-night, I will immediately telegraph the decision to you. It is already agreed between M. Romanos and M. Briand that, in reply to the demand which our minister at Paris will be charged to make, M. Briand will immediately inform him that the Entente accepts His Majesty's proposals and will render Greece all financial and military support that may be necessary. I am asking the —— minister to transmit this telegram to you, and am also communicating it to the —— minister.

“ DIAMANDIDES.”

This telegram clearly shows the terror of the King and his close advisers at seeing our movement assume such importance that the Entente thought it worth while to give us its confidence and support. And this is the explanation of the sudden political *volte-face* which made these people ready to declare war on Bulgaria at a day's notice, in spite of the sixteen Austro-German divisions ! How clearly we

see the subtle and cunning mind of those counsellors of evil, Gounaris and Streit, who held the destinies of Greece in the hollow of their hands! They were ready for *anything*, so long as the power of initiative was not in the hands of the "traitor" Veniselos; and from the same motive Constantine was ready to sign anything—even to desert his dear brother-in-law and "immediately" declare war on his allies!

The next day the President received this second telegram :

" 3rd October, 1916.

" 6.15 a.m.

" Diamandides to President Veniselos,* Canea.

" The King has not yet made a decision with regard to the declaration to be made to the French Government on the two points specified in my telegram of yesterday.

" On the other hand, Colonel Scoumbourdis called on me this morning. He stated that he spoke for himself, but I have been informed by sure authority that he was sent by the King. He said that, being convinced Greece must declare war on Bulgaria, he intended to influence the King in this direction; but first he would like to know whether, in the case of Greece declaring war on Bulgaria and a new cabinet being formed :

* As a matter of documentary accuracy, I will say here that the President's name should be spelt in French with an "s," not with a "z." When I arrived at Canea, I drafted a telegram, at M. Veniselos' orders, addressed to M. Briand, to congratulate him on the brilliant success achieved by the Allies on the Somme. On my asking the President how he spelt his name in French, he replied that he preferred an "s," because the "z" gave a somewhat exotic character to his name.

“ 1. You insist on this cabinet being constituted under your presidency ;

“ 2. Whether you would be content with being represented by your party in a coalition cabinet ; or, again, whether you would prefer, while supporting the cabinet, not to be represented in it.

“ After consulting with the ——— and ——— ministers, I agree with them that in view of the doubts that may still remain as to the sincerity of the King’s intentions, it would be wiser not to give a categorical reply, but to make any reservations you may think fit, without hastily rejecting these proposals, which may lead to the desired end.

“ When Colonel Scoumbourdis asked me to inform you of his views, he expressed a desire to receive your reply within two or three days.

“ DIAMANDIDES.”

Those who know my friend, Colonel (now General) Scoumbourdis, the only clean man who remained in the King’s service, will easily understand that he was the last man who ought to have been chosen to carry out such a mission. In spite of his repeated statements to the contrary, he could not help betraying the fact that he came on behalf of the King. He is no diplomat ; and the last words of the telegram are enough to enable any one to guess—from the question itself and time-limit added—that he was really the envoy of the King, and that the latter was impatient to have a reply from M.¹ Veniselos.

The President waited neither three days nor two

before giving this reply. Acting, quite temporarily, as his foreign secretary, I was entrusted the self-same day with his reply to M. Diamandides, which I forwarded through the same channel of a friendly consulate. As usual, M. Veniselos took a clear view of the matter. Here is his reply :

“Canea,

“4th October, 1916.

“President Veniselos to M. Diamandides, Athens.

“Kindly reply to Colonel Scoumbourdis that in the event of Greece declaring war on Bulgaria and immediately mobilizing, so far from demanding the presidency of the new cabinet, I shall not even ask to be represented in it, and I promise it my full support.

“You will, however, inform the representatives of England and France that the new cabinet must be constituted conformably to their wishes. . . .

“Moreover, the Ministry of War and the Admiralty must be entrusted to persons who will give the necessary guarantees that they will not seek vengeance on the officers who have taken part in the movement. As to these guarantees, we can come to an understanding with the English and French ministers afterwards ; but we must reject the idea of an amnesty as an affront to our honour.

“I consider it my duty to point out to you that you are under an illusion if you think the King has already changed his mind and is prepared to follow the nationalist policy. The new negotiations aim only at gaining time.

“VENISELOS.”

I can picture the wry faces of the King of Athens, Gounaris, Streit and company, when they read this proud reply. How bitterly they must have regretted their desperate haste to sell the Kaiser from jealousy of Veniselos! Any idea of declaring war on Bulgaria was at once abandoned, and these worthies had now one single purpose: to prevent M. Veniselos and his provisional government from declaring war, by putting all possible obstacles in his way, and intriguing with the representatives of France and England to delude them with hopes of the support of the Athens government; all this merely to gain time.

After reading these three telegrams, is it possible to doubt the honesty of purpose of this true and loyal patriot, whose one aim was to serve and save his country by offering Constantine one last chance of doing his duty, and by magnanimously leaving to him the whole honour of the initiative?

To return to our cruise in the Archipelago, the day we sailed from Sude was terribly dark and stormy; the kindly commander Docteur of the *Jurien de la Gravière* informed us that two German submarines, peacefully anchored off the beach which belonged to M. Michelidakis, a member of the Gounaris cabinet, were waiting for us to pass. Neither argument nor entreaty could prevail upon M. Veniselos to embark, for greater safety, on the French destroyer *Lansquenet*, which was conveying us. He said that his fate was linked with ours, and with his habitual modesty, ignored the fact that his life meant everything for Hellenism,

and that, if the *Hesperia* should be torpedoed, *his* death, particularly at that juncture, meant the ruin and disappearance of Greece, which would be at the mercy of the unworthy Constantinian faction. Following the advice of our friends, the English and French officers in harbour at Sude, we changed our course, and steered northwards, making for Milos, thus escaping for the first time the Boche torpedoes directed by the wireless which connected Athens with Berlin via Sofia !

Just as we weighed anchor that evening, M. Veniselos asked me to read aloud a very fine letter from the French minister, M. Guillemin. This letter reached us at the very moment of our departure, a cordial greeting and sincere encouragement in the struggle we were about to face. Here it is ; I hope the eminent friend of Greece will take no offence at the liberty I am taking in publishing it here :

“ Athens,

“ 15-28th September, 1916.

“ MY DEAR PRESIDENT AND FRIEND,

“ I cannot allow the torpedo-boat, which is taking General Danglis, to start without sending by him a word of friendship and my warmest congratulations.

“ I did not know, my dear and great friend, how much I was attached to you until I felt the great void which your departure has left in my heart, and the poignant anxiety which tormented me until I heard of your magnificent success.

Believe me, my thoughts are constantly with you, with Admiral Coundouriotis, and with all your companions, Melas, Negroponte, Averoff, Carapano, those whom I know and those who are unknown to me. You have just added a glorious page to the history of your noble country, and some beauty redounds from it to the whole human race, which already owes so much to Greece.

“ I am wiring to Paris as follows :

“ The admirable proclamation of M. Veniselos has rent all veils and thrown a clear light on the future. Its magnificent language has roused all Greece from torpor. M. Veniselos has performed a miracle : he has awakened the soul of Greece from the lethargic slumber in which German poison had plunged her. The loftiness of his conduct, the nobility of his words, the greatness of his ideas, have thrilled the whole country with enthusiasm ;

and I end by urgently beseeching republican France to support you and not to paralyse your efforts by falling into the clumsy trap laid for you by the King. He wishes the demand for Greek intervention to come from the Powers, so that he may seem to yield to *our* pressure, and not to the wishes of his own people stirred up by Veniselos ! And at this very moment, on the proposal of ——, the governments are thinking of ordering us to make a collective *démarche*. . . .

“ The King must treat with you. . . .

“ Moreover, we have no concern with official

Greece as directed by the King, or with his army as commanded by Dousmanis. What we want is volunteers—as many as you can send us at Salonica.

“ Pardon these hasty lines ; I have been allowed but a few minutes to write to you, and the boat is waiting for my answer.

“ Castillon sends you his kind regards. More than ever, I am with you heart and soul, and rejoice at your magnificent triumph.

“ JEAN GUILLEMIN.”

Many people, even among his closest and most zealous supporters, have been mistaken as to the ideas and intentions of M. Veniselos. Because he fought for years against the Turkish oppressor, and defended his country's liberties, rifle in hand, many have failed to see in him anything but a revolutionary. The Court in particular treated him as such, besides considering him an enemy of the monarchy, because of the dissensions that had arisen between Prince George of Greece, the Powers' High Commissioner in Crete, and his minister, M. Veniselos, owing to divergencies of opinion which unfortunately, in the case of His Royal Highness, degenerated into a hatred as implacable and unjustified as that of his brother, the ex-King, towards the same man.

And yet there was a time when Prince George had unlimited confidence in and admiration of M. Veniselos. As witness the following fact :

His Royal Highness had honoured me with an invitation to Crete in 1898. One morning I had

taken a long walk, and was as hungry as a hunter. Consequently I was more than punctual at lunch-time. That day His Royal Highness kept me literally starving ; he had an interminable audience with one of his ministers. At last, after more than an hour's waiting, the door opened to give passage to a gentleman with a small black beard. He wore spectacles, if I remember aright. The Prince, with much deference, accompanied him to the outer door of his residence at Haleppa. Then, returning to the room where I was waiting with the aides-de-camp, and replying to the gesture of mute despair and impatience in which I had indulged as he passed with his councillor, the Prince said :

“Yes, my dear fellow, but you have been repaid for your long wait ; you have seen Veniselos.”

At that time, I admit, the name had no interest for me, except that I had heard of its bearer as a fine soldier. I was for the time being more anxious to sit down to lunch than to hear of M. Veniselos.

Yet I must say, to Prince George's credit, that if the name of Veniselos was unknown to me, it was not unknown to His Majesty King George I., to whom Prince George of Crete had already many a time expressed his admiration of the great man whose personality was just beginning to make itself felt.

This little incident took place just before the political intrigues of M. Veniselos' rivals in Crete and the evil counsels of His Highness' *entourage*

had led to the unfortunate breach between the two.*

After the *coup d'état* of August, 1909, when M. Veniselos arrived in Athens at the invitation of the leaders of the military league, public opinion already marked him out as the coming chief officer of the state. The monarchy feared him all the more. A few days before his arrival, I remember being with a party of friends at the Hôtel de Kifissia, and hearing Colonel Messalas, aide-de-camp to King George, say that on the day "*that fellow*" Veniselos landed at Piræus the Royal Family would embark from Oropos, a little bay close to the Royal domain of Tatoi, for the King would have no object in remaining in Greece with Veniselos there.

I pointed out to the unwise courtier that, by such an utterance, lightly spoken, he was certainly doing the King no service, for what he said might easily be taken for the echo of the King's own words. I will go further. Admitting that the late King George *had* expressed fear of being dethroned by M. Veniselos, whom the Royal Family regarded as the cause of Prince George's removal from Crete: even if it were so, the aide-de-camp ought not to have repeated in public, especially in such restless days, words which, perhaps, really represented the sentiments that were in his master's heart of hearts.

* Both my brother Constantine, a naval officer and at that time aide-de-camp to His Highness, and myself as secretary to the ex-King, vainly exerted all our efforts in favour of M. Veniselos. My brother, who followed M. Veniselos on board the *Hesperia*, mentioned as a curious coincidence that the date of our arrival at Sude was the anniversary of his departure from Crete with the Prince in 1906, when the Great Powers had decided, in the public interest, to remove him, in order to put an end to the disorders in Crete.

So far from taking his departure, the King, with his tact and fine perception, recognized the superiority of his Prime Minister, and in spite of the wound to his paternal pride, which may still have rankled in his heart, he reposed the fullest confidence in him. Indeed, after the brilliant successes of the Balkan wars, he warmly advised his obstinate son to stick close (*se cramponner*) to M. Veniselos for Greece's sake and for his own.

When fanatics, even at this day, invent all kinds of baseless arguments against M. Veniselos, ignoring the unlooked-for yet unmistakable results of his policy, due mainly, if not solely, to his personal initiative and effort; when I see these blind who *will* not see, and deaf who *will* not hear, I feel inclined to despair of the understanding of some of my fellow-countrymen. How many times have I heard such expressions as: "We don't want any foreigners." "We are neither against the Allies nor for the Germans." "We want to remain neutral; we are Hellenes and must have a policy of our own," etc., etc. By such inane talk did these fanatics attempt to disguise their own mediocrity, prejudice and cowardice. They pretended to aim at a policy of splendid isolation for little Greece at the very time that proud and mighty Albion herself was compelled to come out of her isolation and lend her aid to her allies against the common foe.

Such a refusal to be guided by the clearest evidence is beyond all comprehension. The other day, however, I fancied I saw an explanation of

the mental aberration, of the wave of madness that at times passes over the masses, lowering the level of their intelligence and making them blindly follow any leader who asks for their support.

I was dining in a London hotel to the strains of quite a good orchestra. After a delightful selection from Massenet, this same band attacked a hideous piece of music (!) with horrible grinding discords, fit to make your hair stand on end—in a word, an appalling hullabaloo. I was within an ace of fleeing from the restaurant to escape the monstrous din. Yet this shocking noise was deliriously applauded and even frantically encored. I thought everyone around me had gone mad—or that I had gone mad myself, seeing that I appeared to be the only person present who did not applaud. At last the phenomenon was explained to me. It was simply “Jazz,” they said. I do not know the meaning of this word. I do not know its origin; and I have not the least desire to know. To me it meant only the explanation of one folly by another folly. I understood but one thing: just as the human understanding sometimes, of its own free will, is closed against evidence, so the sense of hearing may be hardened at will against the horrible cacophony of certain sounds, and even greet them with stupid applause.

This is, doubtless, the mental condition of those Greeks who wish to see a return of the old order. Just as there is an anti-musical jazz, so there is an Epistratic jazz, a Goumarist jazz, a Constantinist jazz; there always will be jazzes and fools to applaud them.

Quite recently I heard a lady say in perfect good faith: "Personally, I am neither on King Constantine's side nor on the President's; I shall wait and see which does most good to Greece, and that shall be my side." These are her very words. The dear, good lady is still waiting! She cannot make up her mind between Constantine and Veniselos!

At this moment there is a great deal of propaganda in London in favour of the ex-King. We know of profiteers and new-rich who are lavishly contributing to this propaganda, at the head of which stand ex-officers, military and civil, and other unscrupulous and irresponsible persons who are using all their efforts to restore a King to the throne that he lost by dishonour.

In such a case, how can one parley with madmen? Anyone who did so would be in danger of going mad himself—or at least of being taken for such.

In this same connection, I am not quite sure whether it was Scouloudis or Dragoumis (both ex-Premiers) who was asked if he had read M. Veniselos' famous speech, his swan-song in the House, his last hope of inspiring the whole country with his own enthusiasm to fly to the rescue of Serbia in September, 1915.

"No," was the reply; "I have not read it, and I don't wish to read it; it might convince me." This gentleman may truly be said to have had the courage of his own stupidity.

Those who were not privileged to see at close quarters the vast activities of M. Veniselos during the Peace Conference—in which he was so greatly

aided by his distinguished and indefatigable colleague, M. Politis, the Foreign Minister—can have no idea of the extent of the task accomplished and the successes won towards the realization of national ideals ; and for this cause he is still working with unflagging energy.

And considering that this man's single aim and object in life is the cause of Greece, it is loathsome to see political toadies and parasites add to the burden of his task by begging for favours on the ground that "they were the first to rally to him," "they helped him in the *coup d'état*," or "they support him in the House." It is maddening to see how men fail to recognize that to be a Veniselist in these days is to serve Greece, and to serve Greece is to serve one's own interests as a Hellene.

M. Veniselos has always striven to avoid giving any trouble to the Entente ; he has done everything possible to assist the Entente, as far as consistent with the interests of Greece. I can give no better proof of his attitude than to quote *in extenso* the declaration made by him to the representative of the Havas Agency at Salonica :

"I do not presume to make a complaint against anyone ; I know the difficulties with which the Allied Powers have to contend, and I have no desire to add to them. Quite the reverse. I must tell you that, before undertaking this political move, I applied to none of the Powers for assistance. I acted at my own risk and peril. No encouragement was given to me from any quarter, and consequently I have no claims to formulate, no

compensation or reward of any kind to claim. Save for the support of the Allied armies, I have come quite independently to fulfil my obligations to Serbia by contributing to the common victory as far as our slender means allow. I am doing my utmost, I repeat, to avoid placing any difficulties in the way of our friends. Do they ask me to evacuate Ekatarini? I evacuate Ekatarini. Do they ask me to evacuate Cerigo? I evacuate Cerigo. Do they prescribe a neutral zone? I respect that neutral zone. Do they ask me to refrain from certain political acts? I refrain."

What self-denial, what modesty, what loyalty shines in these few words! And while the Entente was laying all these disabilities on him, it was doing everything in its power to help the King of Athens!

III

THE KING AND VENISELOS

ON the 6th March, 1915, I was invited to dine with my old friend Bosdari, the Italian Minister at Athens. I shall always remember it as the day when my patriotic dreams suffered a cruel disappointment. It was the day following the last Crown Council demanded by M. Veniselos of the King. In the course of it all the former Presidents of the Council, the party leaders and the Chief of Staff supported him in the view that it was time to end the neutrality prescribed by the King, whose motives were only too well known.

It is true that, at this Council, the King had asked for twenty-four hours for reflection, as he said, but really that he might have time, during the night, to get into touch with Berlin. But as a Constitutional king, such as I had hitherto looked on him to be—and as I made bold to tell him that very morning, more than once—I had every reason to believe that the delay asked for was a mere matter of form, and that he would never dream of acting against the opinion so clearly formulated by all. Even M. G. Theotoky, an avowed Germanophile, whose German sympathies had become the more

pronounced since the Kaiser invited him to dinner at Corfu, had loyally declared that the King must follow the advice of M. Veniselos. Knowing how undisguisedly I favoured the Entente, M. Theotoky said to me on leaving the Palace: "Well, Melas, you should be pleased. Veniselos has carried the day, and, frankly, I believe it is best for Greece."

It was the word of a man who was capable of recognizing the superiority of M. Veniselos. Accordingly I went to the King that morning quite radiant and full of hope and enthusiasm. I saw my dreams of Hellenism taking shape, and almost a reality. His Majesty, who for days past had seen me nervous and preoccupied, at once noticed the change wrought in me, and asked why I looked so pleased.

"Ah, sir," I replied, "since the decision of yesterday evening I feel ever so happy."

"But what do you know of my intentions?" said the King. "You are aware that I asked twenty-four hours for reflection? Well, I have reflected."

It immediately dawned on me that he meditated a *coup d'état*, and I gave vent to my apprehensions.

"Yes," he said. "That is absolutely what I have made up my mind to do rather than abandon my neutrality. Say nothing to anyone at present. M. Veniselos must be summoned for 2.15. I am quite resolved not to stir a foot as yet."

I was dumbfounded. All my dreams of glory and greatness for my country crumbled in one moment, because a man who could not even claim to be a Greek would have it so. King Constantine in so deciding, by spinning a coin as one

might say, condemned to death 600,000 victims in Thrace and Asia Minor. From that date, the 6th March, 1915, Constantine, to the last day of his short reign, was totally outside and independent of the Constitution, which he henceforth violated by his every act. From that day onward he was false to his oath. He thought himself thereafter responsible to God alone! The will of the nation was nothing to him. From the moment of his first leaving the high road of the Constitution, he but heaped disaster on disaster. Thenceforward he kept but two things steadily in view: to destroy the man he considered his rival, and to gain time in hope and expectation of a German triumph. His manifest duplicity brought almost a general breakdown in Greece.

The King's decision and the weakness of his arguments revolted me to such an extent that I spoke to him very freely from my point of view. I reproached him with having played a part in convoking two Crown Councils when he had already made up his mind to have his way against the advice of others. I even took the liberty to point out to him that, as a constitutional king, he had no right to go contrary to the unanimous decision expressed the evening before. I don't remember what more I said to him, but I am very sure that Constantine has often remembered since the somewhat harsh words that I, as his devoted servant and friend, had the courage to speak to him that morning of the 6th March, 1915.

I passed the rest of the morning deciphering an interminable telegram to His Majesty from Jean

Dragoumis, his Minister at Petrograd, in which he begged him to follow the policy of M. Veniselos and to abandon his neutrality in favour of the Entente. Since then, this very minor politician has turned his coat partly to flatter the ex-King and partly from jealousy of M. Veniselos. As soon as I had deciphered the telegram, I made it a pretext to return to His Majesty in order that I might read it to him and at the same time try once more to make him revoke his decision before the fatal hour should strike. When I had finished reading it, the King took the telegram from my hands, tore it into a thousand pieces and flung it angrily into the waste-paper basket, calling his representative at Petrograd an "ass in a hurry."

In this state of mind, with despair in my soul, I went out to lunch with Comtesse Bosdari. There was also present at lunch, as if by chance, the Bulgarian Minister, Passaroff, the budding ally of Italy in her hatred of Veniselos. Both Ministers hoped, no doubt, to get detailed information from me about the Council of the previous evening. The ex-King's inconceivable decision was not yet known; all the chancelleries of Europe had been informed, on the contrary, by their representatives that, as the result of the Council, the abandonment of the neutrality had been signified.

I suffered veritable martyrdom at this luncheon party, for the two Ministers did not cease for one minute to deplore, in advance, the consequences, so much wished for by us, of the warlike decision of Greece. As though purposely, both Ministers

kept harping on the immense advantages that would accrue to the Entente by the mere fact of our decision to take the field in support of Serbia. It would oblige Italy to range herself also alongside of "the Allies," declared Bosdari, and "Bulgaria also," bemoaned Passaroff. "And Roumania too," they chorused. "Veniselos is a madman! Why can't he be quiet; why must Greece mix herself up with this war and drag us all into it?"

In fine, everything said by the Ministers of Italy and Bulgaria put into words our own most ardent wishes. Nothing could have been more covenant with our wishes than that, though we were but a little country ourselves, we should bring formidable aid to France and England by bringing others also in their support.

The fear so openly expressed by Bosdari and Passaroff was a clear index of the terror that the possible intervention of little Greece was already awakening among the big nations engaged. While they were giving vent to their Jeremiads, I sat by in agonized silence. As I listened but one idea possessed me, that was to see the King again before M. Veniselos should get to the Palace, and make a last supreme attempt. So, under pretext of an urgent telegram, I hurriedly left the Italian Legation, which luckily was not far from the Palace, and ran to see the King, who was still at luncheon. I waited for him in his study.

In crossing the salon I had caught sight of the President, who had got there before me, waiting modestly in a corner on the King's good pleasure. His Majesty seemed to have divined, not only to

have suspected, the object of my visit. With a glance at his wrist-watch to show that I must be quick, he exclaimed: "What is the matter? I am sure that the President is already here."

I took good care not to tell him that such was the case, and then, in few words, I put him in possession of all I had heard when at the Bosdaris'. I mentioned to him the apprehension so frankly expressed by the two Ministers, who certainly reflected the opinion of their respective countries. I represented to him that he held the key of the Balkans in his hands: that he was master of the situation: it all hung on him, on what he should say in a few minutes' time to M. Veniselos: that the issue of the world war, perhaps, and in any case its duration, depended on him. I made him see the terrible consequences for Greece if Germany allied herself with Bulgaria and thus established direct communications with Turkey, whom we knew to be her ally from the first day. Alas! that was just what the Kaiser wished, and the criminal part played by Constantine, namely, to hem in Greece and prevent her from acting, that William might have a free hand to our prejudice in the Balkans. All was in vain. The King let me talk, while keeping his eye on his watch.

I changed, then, my tactics; I tried intimidation; I tried to frighten him. I spoke of the strength and influence that M. Veniselos had in the country. I did not scruple to tell him that, as matters were between him and the President, the latter was incontestably the stronger: that at a word from him the whole country would rise and that his throne

would fall. I told him that, that same morning at the Foreign Office, when I had spoken of his intention to M. Politis, he had refused to believe me, saying : " If the King insists on doing as you say, serious things may happen, and it may cost him dear." This time I got home ; the King no longer looked at his watch and showed no impatience to see M. Veniselos in my place. He began to discuss the probable consequences of the *coup* he was meditating with visible disquietude. I had managed to frighten him. Unfortunately I saw my advantage too late. I could not profit by it. I only grasped it when I went back again to the King after M. Veniselos had departed. His Majesty said, joyfully, like a school-boy who had escaped a punishment :

" The President was not so angry as you made him out to be. He was not even hostile—we separated on very good terms."

It was only then that I realized the impression my words had made on him. I shall repent it all my life long that I failed to inform the President, on seeing him again when I passed out into the salon, of the King's state of mind when I left him. M. Veniselos would undoubtedly have known how to take advantage of it in order to impose his policy, rather than to hand over the Government to men of straw.

The fact is that on that day the King successfully applied the counsel given him by his Imperial brother-in-law. The Emperor had once reproached him with his inability to rid himself of Veniselos, as he himself had dismissed Bismarck.

All the same, the King felt that he was guilty. His nervous tension was obvious. He could not keep still ; he feared to be alone, as though he would avoid the voice of conscience. Twice that morning he came to see me in my bureau without any reason, and it was easy to perceive that his mind was a prey to some remnants of doubt, some lingering hesitation. Indubitably, on that morning, Constantine felt that he had staked his all. And there he was not wrong.

That same night, Baron Schenck, whose memory is detested in our country, returning to the Hôtel de la Grande Bretagne, triumphantly declared that he had overthrown the Government, and the German secretaries opened champagne at the Club to celebrate the victory. Moreover, two days before, after the first Council, he said, in order to give confidence to the Germanophiles who thought that German influence was at an end : " All is not lost." He was sure of his facts and knew what he was talking about, for while both Councils were sitting he was calmly awaiting the results in the Queen's apartments.

One thing which would have given rise to much commentary had it been known was that, very shortly before the first Council, the King had given a long interview to Ghalip Bey, the Turkish Minister, the representative of a country with which there was every reason to believe Greece would declare war within a few hours.

If any doubt remains that it was Berlin which

dictated these decisions to Athens, I may quote a telegram of our Minister at Berlin, Nicholas Theotoky, whose Germanic tendencies were exhibited by the shameful manner in which he abased himself before the Government at Berlin, of which he had now become the mere tool. On the day of the last Council, the 5th March, 1915, he telegraphed as follows :

“ Minister Foreign Affairs communicated to me last night a dispatch from the German Consul at Canea, saying that a certain number of Cretan reservists, led by an officer of reserve and by an ecclesiastic, have paraded the town threatening the Musulmans. M. de Jagow, in communicating this, adds that he regrets that such scenes should take place ; that if they become known in Turkey —(Wangenheim had already seen to this)—they may give rise to reprisals in the form of persecution—(had they ever ceased ?)—against the Turkish elements of the population. The Minister of Foreign Affairs furthermore advised that he immediately telegraphed to the German Ambassador at Constantinople that he should exert his influence on those directing affairs in Turkey in order that the incident shall not be exploited by the local Press. The Minister of Foreign Affairs concludes by requesting that measures may be taken for the prevention of similar scenes.”

This telegram reached Athens on the very day when, as I have said above, King Constantine, having given audience to Ghalip Bey, handed over by his decision 600,000 innocent victims to the Turks ; and Theotoky had not the sense to reply

to Jagow that the Germans who dared to threaten reprisals had not troubled about finding a pretext for the pillage and murder perpetrated by the Turks of whole populations and towns in Asia Minor, egged on by Liman von Sanders. This telegram showed plainly what we should have to expect if the Germans proved victorious, the enslavement of Greece to Turks and Bulgarians, the protégés of Germany.

The day following the *coup d'état* I pointed out to the King that anyone in the place of M. Veniselos who had, as he had, a majority in the Chamber and the confidence of the country, would have raised a revolt in Athens, whereas he on leaving the Palace at once bestirred himself to give instructions for the maintenance of order and the suppression of any manifestations. It is true that at the moment the sentiment dominating the crowd was stupefaction, indignation, refusal to believe that the King could have dared to act as he had done! Sentiments such as these are not manifested by street cries, or riots, and any attempt to suppress them only adds to their strength and ensures that they will find a vent sooner or later.

When I spoke to the King of the attitude taken up by M. Veniselos, he said, and not without emotion: "You are right; Veniselos has behaved perfectly." But his evil counsellors hastened to bring their master back to his former frame of mind, for, when two days later, I spoke to His Majesty on the same subject and reproached him with the fatal decision which was already beginning to alienate sympathy from

him, and which was being loudly criticized, he made answer in quite another tone :

“ I care nothing for what the public say ; I am not a man to be led by the nose.”

Yes, Constantine actually said he was not a man to be led by the nose. He, with whom people did what they liked, except for certain and brief displays of obstinacy—he thought he ruled, when in reality it was others who were ruling him.

Before closing my remarks on the subject of the Council, I can say from documentary knowledge that certain phrases let fall by the King were misunderstood and twisted by repetition. His Majesty never said that he would rather abdicate than abandon his neutrality. He said : “ Rather than draw down upon us the enmity of England I will abdicate in favour of the Prince Royal.”

I have said in my chapter on the King that there had been an entire neglect to cultivate his good instincts. The following fact will show that the King had his good impulses at times, but that he had not the strength of character to follow them up, and that there was always a Dousmanis, a Gounaris, a Streit, at hand to prevent him. Thus, for instance, when on the 25th March, 1915, the Gounaris Government, acting on Streit's advice, published an official *communiqué*, giving a denial in terms as false as they were insulting, to some words of M. Veniselos, the latter, disdaining communication with Gounaris and his Government, addressed a letter direct to the King, requesting, in proud and dignified terms, reparation for so cruel an offence.

The King was much moved on reading this letter, and would have immediately replied to it himself, but Gounaris and Streit, becoming aware of this, exerted themselves to prevent it, and the King obeyed them.

Another time, after the dismissal of M. Veniselos in March, 1915, I took the liberty to suggest to His Majesty that it would be right to show his former Prime Minister some act of politeness or amiability, such as an invitation to dinner or the gift of a signed portrait, or some other mark of esteem and sympathy such as the King might decide. The King got up, went to a table, and took up a framed photograph of himself and held it out to me, and I saw the following dedication written by his hand: "To M. Veniselos, in remembrance of a long and valued collaboration.—Constantine R."

"You see," he said, with simple complacency and pride, "I have not waited for your advice to do as you say."

Well, the portrait remained in the King's cabinet in the very place where the King had put it, on a little leather canopy, for six whole months. Once again, Streit had not allowed the King to have his way. And this was the King who said that he would not let himself be led by the nose! Not by everyone, it is true; but by imbeciles, it is also true. Gounaris and Streit would on no account allow Constantine to show M. Veniselos the slightest civility, or to take any step which at some future day might have been calculated to improve the relations of the King with his Minister. They were

afraid of him, for the difference between M. Veniselos and themselves was so great that they rightly feared to provoke any comparison. They both had the same end in view, and that was to widen the breach between Constantine and Veniselos. Every time I sought to restore the King's decision in this matter of the portrait, for which I had easy and constant occasion, seeing that it was always in the same place, facing the King, as if in constant reminder of that "valued collaboration," the King would make the same reply, and say with the same complacence :

"It would not be at all politic, you see." The reply was dictated by his counsellors.

The King, however, did send the portrait to M. Veniselos, but six months later, at the end of September, 1915, after his second resignation, following on the second *coup d'état*. By this time Gounaris and Streit looked on M. Veniselos as finally and irrevocably checkmated. They now only felt pity and commiseration for him. Having nothing to fear, they were magnanimous enough to allow the King to give M. Veniselos this satisfaction, saying, no doubt, with Racine :

"O soupirs ! O regrets ! Ah ! qu'il est doux de plaindre
Le sort d'un ennemi qui n'est plus à craindre !"

In April, 1915, when, as very frequently happened, I was speaking about M. Veniselos to the King, His Majesty complained that the Veniselist Press, and even the President himself in private conversations, expressed the desire to humiliate him when the Liberals came back into power. To these complaints and accusations I made answer that

if any such threats had been uttered they were addressed, and with reason, to the Government of Gounaris. The King would not admit this point of view, and bluntly retorted: "Government or King, it is the same thing." He should rather have said, "I am the Government," for it would have been truer. At least he had the courage of his opinions, whereas his evil counsellors always screened themselves behind him.

Apropos of these alleged threats of M. Veniselos, I repeated to His Majesty the reply which my brother, the deputy, had brought to me the evening before when I had complained to him, quite unofficially, of certain ultra-violent articles against the King in the Veniselist Press.

"Ask your brother to tell the King if ever I am restored to power, I shall indeed demand some reparation, and that is, that His Majesty should give me his hand and that in his hand he should place his heart; that is all I shall ask of him." All Veniselos is in these words; he only asked that the King should be loyal with him as he himself was loyal with all. But, unfortunately for Greece and for himself, it was what the King could never be. Nevertheless, the King was much moved by the President's message, and he asked, childishly enough, as if the moment supposed had already supervened:

"How should he know whether my heart were in my hand or not?" I naturally replied that those were things that may be felt and understood though not seen.

After this conversation the King seemed quite a changed man. He was more confidential and sympathetic with me than ever. In a word, he was so easy with me that I had the impression of having gained a real victory; for at this time even to mention the name of Veniselos without provoking a frown was something of an achievement, and few, I think, would have risked it. The King's interrogation about his giving his hand to M. Veniselos and the general tone of our interview, caused me to hope that a *rapprochement* with M. Veniselos was near, notwithstanding that up to the preceding evening, the Government, the Staff, and the entire *entourage* had spoken of such an eventuality as absolutely impossible even in the distant future. This unlooked-for success having given me confidence and restored my courage, I pushed my operations further, and shortly after, at a reception given by Madame Stratos, the Minister's wife, I embarked on a serious talk with M. Zographos, the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

George Zographos was the only man with clean hands in Gounaris' ministry, the only man who was not a Chauvinist, and, at that time, the only friend of the Entente. He was very popular in Greece just then, for he had put himself at the head of the Epirote movement shortly before, for setting up a provisional government in Epirus to safeguard that province, which is eminently Greek, from the designs of Italy, who would have had Epirus added to Albania, ostensibly as an appanage of the *opéroubouffe* kingdom of the Prince of Wied, but really

in order that, when the day should come, she could more easily claim it for herself.

Zographos had great difficulties to contend with and surmount, for the Government of Greece afforded him no official recognition. His difficulties and differences with the Greek Government had left him, it is true, with a certain soreness against M. Veniselos, but he did not display the fanaticism which was an essential characteristic of the Gounaris administration. Besides, Zographos has sufficiently proved it, as I shall show, but before I continue I will allow myself a digression.

I have spoken of the opposition of M. Veniselos on the question of Epirus. Herein there is nothing to astonish those who are aware of the opinions of that genuine patriot. I myself, as an Epirote, owed him a grudge, and I must own that often, using or rather abusing my position, I did all I could to further the interests of the military party in Epirus, among whom I numbered two of my brothers. M. Veniselos had, however, good reasons for his line of action. The Great Powers were then anxious to avoid, at all costs, having anything to do with the subterranean machinations of Italy, then the ally of Germany. In provoking the intervention of the Great Powers, Greece would risk setting a match to the powder, and the President did not wish to see his country the cause, and the theatre, of a European war. Moreover, M. Veniselos had found himself, for the same reason, in a very awkward situation, nay, an agonizing situation for himself personally as head of the

Greek Government and as a Cretan, when in 1912 he had found himself compelled to refuse the Cretan Deputies admission to the Greek Chamber, for fear of complications with Turkey, who was threatening us with hostilities.

I now come back to my conversation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs. He spoke, naturally, of the general situation, which was more than grave from all points of view, and which was the result of the empty and senseless policy of the Gounaris administration. Zographos did not attempt to conceal the poor opinion he had of his chief, and acknowledged that Veniselos was the only man to save Greece from chaos. Thereupon, I appealed to his patriotism and loyalty, and made him promise to speak in the same sense to the King, and suggest the immediate recall of M. Veniselos.

While we were talking in the hall, I had seen the King appear in the doorway of the salon and turn his searching gaze on us. The Minister was so placed that he could not perceive this, and I pretended to see nothing, so that I might finish what I had to say. But two minutes later our host came hurrying towards us to press us to take refreshments, though there were plenty of pretty women present on whom his attentions had been better bestowed, and I understood well enough that he had come at the King's behest to interrupt a conversation whose subject had been divined and was not agreeable to His Majesty.

Zographos kept his word, and the very next day sought audience of the King. Soon after he had

left, the King sent for me, told me what the Minister had had to say, and, looking me in the face, said, half laughing, half annoyed :

“ Own that it was you who catechized Zographos last night.”

For the first time in my life I lied to the King. With the most innocent air, I replied that Zographos had spoken first, and that his conviction was that of every good patriot, namely, that the present state of affairs must not last. I told him roundly that every Minister of Gounaris' cabinet had transformed his ministerial office into an electioneering centre in view of the elections that were to set up a Gounarist party without regard to national interests. Some good, though, came out of that conversation. His Majesty said brusquely that nothing would make him recall M. Veniselos unless the people elected him. I did not conceal my fears that in view of the sinister machinations of his Ministers—the electioneering extravagances of Gounaris and others in Macedonia were only too well known—the success of M. Veniselos was problematical.

His Majesty replied to this :

“ You need not be anxious. Veniselos will carry the electorate, take my word for it.”

Constantine proved a good prophet ; but next night he looked askance at me at the Countess Bosdari's, and I concluded that the Queen and his advisers had been reading him a lecture for letting me speak as I did the day before.

The King never failed to tell the Queen and his Ministers whatever I said to him. Whenever I

had spoken of M. Veniselos I always begged him to give me his word to say nothing to the Queen, and he would promise laughingly, saying, "very good, very good," but the same evening he would hasten to tell her all I had said. So that next morning first thing, telephones and Palace officials were in a stir, the German and Germanophile cliques rushed in post haste to undo my work of the evening before. Of all this I was informed by certain of the King's servants, more devoted to their country than to him.

The 5th October, 1915, saw the same scene enacted as on the preceding 6th March.

The day before, by a stirring patriotic speech in the Chamber, M. Veniselos had literally crushed his adversaries the Rhallys, the Gounaris, Theotoky and the rest, by pointing out for the last time the path which honour demanded should be trodden by Greece, and by reaffirming that it was her duty to go to the assistance of Serbia. But M. Veniselos had dared to say, in answer to an interpellation as to what Greek troops were to do if, behind the Bulgarian army they came upon German bayonets, that even in such a case Greek soldiers would know their duty. This they were able to put to proof, for they not only fought, but took German prisoners.

M. Veniselos showed himself conspicuously lacking in respect for the Kaiser when he spoke such words! To dare to speak of the Kaiser's armies with such freedom! Rank treason! He was punished by a fresh demand for his resignation on the following day, for nothing in the world could have

induced the King to move against the Germans. The next day the King came to Athens about four o'clock, having summoned M. Veniselos that morning, and let him know that he could not tolerate official pronouncements against Germany.

Before receiving the President, the King had a lengthy interview with *l'éminence grise*, Streit. On my arrival at the Palace I found His Majesty at the Marshalat, in animated conversation with Colonel Metaxas, while at the other end of the room the two aides-de-camp and Mercati were chatting together. Always the same surrounding of Germanophiles and anti-Veniselists. There was a sudden silence as I entered, and Metaxas left. I had long been accustomed to these eloquent silences on my approach. They no longer affected me. I am well enough advised of the theme of all those interesting conversations; their everlasting burden was the "traitor" Veniselos. Always the same lobby intrigues, the same nervous disquiet on the part of the King, who went in and out to chase away his solitude and to dispel the impressions left by the second *coup d'état*.

Once more, it was M. Zaimis, an unpalatable remedy, who was charged with the formation of a coalition cabinet composed of all the former presidents of Council, including of course Gounaris, become indispensable to the Crown by his docility. Thus, when we were at the most critical moment of our history, differences broke out again between the King and the country on a fallacious pretext, and all our efforts to convince the Entente of Bulgaria's

bad faith, only served to bring our own good faith in doubt.

When after the last elections in the month of May and the assembling of the Chamber, so unconstitutionally retarded, the King was forced to recall M. Veniselos and charge him with the formation of a new cabinet, the King's aide-de-camp, Levidis, said to all and sundry, and to me among others, that the King had declared that "since M. Veniselos was set upon receiving another kick, he should have it." Thus do bad servants compromise their masters.

As I say, the King kept his promise, at the first direct threat to Germany. I pass over the innumerable pinpricks and backstair intrigues which made existence impossible for the Veniselist ministry, in spite of all the patience and long-suffering of its leader.

But how could M. Veniselos work together with the King? On the 4th August, 1915, I met His Majesty, who had gone on a motor tour with the Queen as far as Kifissia. He was remarkably pale, and seemed very ill. I saw him in the town next day and told him of the anxiety I felt on seeing him look so ill.

"Naturally," he said rather angrily, "I was looking ill that day, you know whom I had seen in the morning." It was in fact the day on which M. Veniselos had been sent for to form a new cabinet.

On assuming the formation of a Cabinet in August, 1915, he made a very clear statement to

the King of the policy he proposed to pursue. In view of the situation then prevailing, he no longer contemplated intervention in the Dardanelles ; we had let the opportunity slip at the time when M. Veniselos had so urgently advised it in March, and now it was too late ; the enterprise had ended in disaster which entailed losses too great to be repaired, and all without any result. On the other hand, M. Veniselos declared his wish to maintain a benevolent neutrality in regard to Serbia and the Allies ; to attack Bulgaria and defend the Allies if the Bulgarians attacked Serbia : in a word, to respect our obligations while defending our own interests, without directly threatening Germany.

But this agreement between M. Veniselos and the King was only apparent, so far at least as the latter was concerned, for at the very beginning the King had failed to give his heart with his hand, as M. Veniselos had so modestly requested.

Instead of his heart, the King offered but hatred and bad faith. In this first interview the President, in view of the King's weakness, which was still very marked, tactfully refrained from mentioning the infamies that His Majesty had suffered and even encouraged Gounaris to commit in regard to him. The King on his side took care to make no allusion to them. I believe that on that day M. Veniselos reproached him with but one thing and that was, with the reply given by Gounaris to the Entente Powers on their Note of the 3rd August, 1915, concerning the cession of Cavalla to the Bulgarians on the motion of Lord Grey.

This note, hurriedly drawn up, in a tone that was

menacing, put the new cabinet in a very embarrassing position at the moment of its formation. It was a Parthian shaft well worthy of the subtle lawyer Gounaris. Thus, on Constantine's part there was no frank or loyal outspokenness, and the divergence of view becoming more pronounced than ever, was destined to break out into open rupture on the first occasion.

Everyone was taken in as to the supposed perfect understanding between the Crown and the Government when, in response to the Bulgarian mobilization on the 23rd September, 1915, ours was also decided upon. M. Veniselos was desirous of it in order to hold Bulgaria in check in case of eventualities, even in case of war for which the whole nation had proved its readiness in the recent elections, which had resulted in a victory for the Veniselist party, whose programme was war.

The King, taken unawares by the decision of Bulgaria, and impressed by the President's irrefutable arguments, was obliged with great reluctance to sign the decree for mobilization the same evening. Now this mobilization he and his General Staff, in spite of their determination not to let it serve the warlike projects of M. Veniselos, maintained and even expedited for a Machiavellian purpose, and that was, to put into the King's hand a weapon he could use against Veniselos.

But Constantine did something much worse than that.

His grand crime against the nation, his blackest

offence against M. Veniselos, was that he betrayed Greece and Serbia to Bulgaria, and that he allowed Gounaris to give direct assurance to Sofia on the eve of the day when M. Veniselos was to be called to the head of the Government, that Greece would in no case help Serbia and that consequently Bulgaria might, at its leisure, crush the unhappy Serbians, already attacked by the Austrians and Germans. And he completed this infamy by what he officially charged Passaroff to tell his Government towards the end of September, 1915.

In these conditions what collaboration was humanly possible even with the best will in the world? Besides, the King was adamant in his resolution not to act with the Allies. The Russian Minister informed me that the King had definitely told him so. And to another Minister, who asked me not to tell his name, he confided that he had given his formal promise to the Queen not to fight against her brother and his allies. In these conditions how was it possible for M. Veniselos to remain in power?

M. Veniselos was ignorant of all this, and herein we see the King's abominable duplicity. The President was in ignorance of the declaration made to Bulgaria when he formed his last cabinet. He was ignorant, even after he had taken office, of the King's personal treachery. Even those who knew Constantine well would never have believed him capable of such crimes. And unhappily there are some who will not believe it to this day. It was owing to his ignorance of these Royal iniquities that M. Veniselos,

in his letter to the King of the 12th September, 1915, wrote that M. Radoslavoff's assurance regarding the neutrality of Greece is incorrect." Alas! M. Radoslavoff spoke but the truth.

After all this, what is there surprising in the fact that an officer,* one unworthy to be so called, a vile valet of the ex-King, should accompany a Bulgarian informer to Salonica to spy on the Allies and on ourselves, for by this time we were already in line with them.

That these crimes are unknown is the only explanation that can be offered of the fact that in London, Paris, America and Athens intrigues in favour of ex-King Constantine are still carried on.

This vindictive determination to upset the policy of M. Veniselos was still more openly manifested when, on the 20th October, 1915, Sir Francis Elliot visited the Palace to make official announcement on behalf of the English Government that Cyprus was to be ceded to Greece, in anticipation of our taking part in the war. He had confided this to me the evening before, and had expressed his conviction that the cession would certainly end the King's hesitation, and range Greece on the side of the Allies. I told Elliot that the King would not only refuse Cyprus, but that he would refuse

* Special Tribunal, Athens, 4th March, 1920. Evidence of an officer of the Gendarmerie L. P. against the officer Zach, . . . who had accompanied to Salonica the Bulgarian officer Take. This evidence clearly proves the participation of the Government, the General Staff and of the Court in the orders given to allow German couriers to cross the neutral zone of Macedonia and to allow the harvest of Thessaly to be handed over to Bulgaria.

Constantinople itself, were the offer due to the policy of M. Veniselos. I was not wrong.

This hatred found vent in another circumstance sufficiently ridiculous, after consultation with Streit. Speaking of the possibility of a fresh dissolution, for the Chamber was too Veniselist to please the King and Gounaris, the King said, quite seriously, that M. Veniselos could not in any case be trusted with the formation of a ministry, because of the toast he had drunk at a dinner given in his honour by M. Guillemin, Minister for France, as "it would be equivalent to a declaration of war on Germany." This was from the mouth of Streit, pure and simple. At this dinner, M. Veniselos had, as a matter of fact, shown the bad taste to drink to France and her success in the war!

Constantine is not aware that on many occasions when, at his command, I was replying to French generals and other such personages, and signed in my official capacity as Secretary, I invariably wound up my letters by complimentary wishes for the realisation of French aims. It was more diplomatic, but what would have been the Kaiser's feelings had he known that his brother-in-law was expressing these official good wishes!

Once, apropos of the Kaiser, the King said to me that M. Veniselos was wrong to show such eagerness to declare war on Bulgaria, for the Kaiser had promised him that after peace was arrived at, we could perfectly well arrange matters with Serbia and Roumania, and then we could all fall on Bulgaria and take back what the three countries had

been obliged to cede during the war! A child could not have been more credulous and absurd, but the Kaiser, inspired by divine grace, of course could make no mistake, and whatever he said must be sacred! Anyway, the notion was thoroughly German.

When, at the close of October, 1915, the Zaimis ministry fell, and was replaced by the still more hopeless and criminal administration of Skouloudis, I took the liberty to point out to His Majesty the danger of holding elections at such moments while mobilization was in progress, without any plausible reason except to injure M. Veniselos and his supporters.

“I know that,” said the King, “but it is the fault of Veniselos. It is on account of him that I am forced to dissolve, and he should have thought of it sooner.”

Certainly it was very annoying to have a big Veniselist majority in the Chamber—it was all the fault of Veniselos—he should not have had such a majority—he should have thought of that.

And so things went on in this aimless fashion, and the King continued to go astray in his blind hatred. It was ever the same refrain, it was always the fault of Veniselos. In spite of it all I said to the King that only the evening before, at a dinner—for I had the hardihood to dine in houses where I met the President—that I had spoken with M. Veniselos, and that he had said that if he were asked to do so he was ready, in order to save the country from the upset of fresh elections, to lend support to the new

cabinet by causing his party to abstain from opposition to certain measures of urgency.

"This is some nonsense of his," he said. "I have heard nothing about it."

On leaving the Palace, I went to my brother and asked him to tell M. Veniselos what the King had said, for his words had given me hope that a compromise might be arrived at, and the new elections avoided. The same afternoon I obtained an audience for M. Grivas, the Veniselist deputy, who came from M. Veniselos to tell the King officially what I myself had told him already. But whether the King was unwilling, which is most probable, or whether it was too late, for Gounaris the evening before had already jockeyed him into signing the Decree for the dissolution of the Chamber, M. Veniselos' patriotic proposals were not accepted.

As I have already spoken of Skouloudis, I cannot resist citing a *bon mot* of M. Guillemin, who called him the "*Premier conditionnel*." M. Skouloudis was as deceitful as he was spiteful, and utterly incapable of filling the office of prime minister, never dared say anything definite for fear of compromising himself. He always spoke in the conditional mood, leaving everything vague so that if occasion arose he could the more easily repudiate it.

It is not astonishing, considering the King's publicly expressed determination never to recall M. Veniselos, that the Veniselist party was decided not to try conclusions in the ballot. This was a further crime on the part of the President and his

friends. The Constantine faction was outraged because its enemies refused to stand up with folded arms and receive punishment.

The small number of electors who took part in these elections itself constituted a triumph for M. Veniselos, which was as striking as an actual success at the polls.

To give some idea of the mentality of these people, I may recount that, some days before the elections, and before the attitude of the Veniselists was known, Colonel Levidis, the King's favourite aide-de-camp, and Roidi, talking in my presence, of the King's right to dissolve the Chamber, claimed that the King was within his rights in dissolving it as often as he pleased, until he had a Chamber to his liking : that is to say, a house filled with docile nonentities.

I took no part in this foolish talk, but simply said : " The pitcher that goes to the well too often is broken at last." The King was informed of my words the same day. And yet Greece was regarded as a Constitutional country. And these same people made it a reproach to M. Veniselos that he did not stand for election, knowing what awaited him if he succeeded. What encouraged them beyond all things, was the knowledge that M. Veniselos would never, in any event, stir up civil war.

The 10th December, 1915, I had a long interview with M. D. Rhallys, former President of Council, as he was leaving after an audience with the King. Rhallys was violent and headstrong, but he was honest, witty, and to some extent a patriot.

Someone said of him : “ When Rhallys is in office he is a proper gentleman, in opposition he is a guttersnipe.”


On this occasion he was very downcast, and said, rather sadly, that never had matters seemed so adverse, and that the evening before he had done everything he could to oppose the authorization demanded by Germany for a free passage through Macedonia for the Bulgarians, but that the contrary opinion had prevailed. He said that the mere refusal would have sufficed, and that the Bulgarians would never have insisted. But it pleased the King because it pleased the Kaiser ! The Kaiser’s wishes must be obeyed. This first betrayal, of the Macedonians, led to the betrayal of Fort Rupel, of Serres, and of Cavalla. However, he said that the King was becoming sensible of the danger, and had at last made up his mind to remonstrate with his dear brother-in-law, and tell him that he was forcing the note when he foisted Bulgaria upon us in this fashion. But Streit got to know of it, and took care that it was not done. M. Rhallys told me, further, that the King had avowed to him in confidence that he now recognized the incompetence of Gounaris, and saw that he had been deceived in him.

I have so often mentioned Streit in these pages, that I may well devote a few lines to him, since he is not worthy of a chapter to himself. Moreover, he may well have his place here, by reason of the unlucky part he played as evil genius to the King in preventing any reconciliation between him

and M. Veniselos. Here he may flatter himself on having succeeded beyond his hopes. By his base intrigues he only injured the King, but he might have done irreparable harm to Greece, and his name must now be execrated by all true Hellenes. It is no news that Streit was more German than Greek. This was so well known in days before the war, that George I., sending a mission to Denmark, refused to employ him despite the recommendation of M. Callergis, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, saying that he considered him too much of a German for such a mission.

It has been said with some reason that Streit was the King's right-hand man. First and foremost he was the Kaiser's minister at Athens, and kept Berlin informed of all that was said and done there heedless of the harm he might do to Greece. It was not that the King had any special liking for him, but their common bond was a hatred of M. Veniselos, a hatred that Streit never neglected to feed and animate. His hatred dated from the day when M. Veniselos turned him out of the Ministerial Council without ceremony, on discovering that he had a policy of his own in favour of the Central Powers. His devotion to Germany was accentuated by the attentions paid him by the Kaiser at Corfu, in the spring of 1914; and to Austria, since the day when, as Minister at Vienna, Francis Joseph decorated him with some order or other.

As much may be said of M. Theotoky, our former Minister at Berlin. He is one of those whose patriotism is measured by the colour and width



of the ribbons pinned on their breast. He acted with all the greater impudence, and with the meddlesome criminality of a self-made privy-counsellor, since he had no sort of responsibility to anyone, neither to the King, nor to the country, nor even to his own conscience.

Streit does not know the meaning of truth or outspokenness. And Streit is not a man of courage. He did not respond to my provocation when, beside myself at the betrayal of Cavalla and the 4th Army Corps to the Bulgarians, a treachery in which, along with the General Staff and the Skouloudis Government, he was one of the prime factors, I challenged him to a duel. He modestly contented himself with lodging a complaint against me for defamation of character because I called him a pro-German! this just at the moment Theotoky's famous telegram arrived from Berlin, wherein von Jagow threatened Greece and the King with the descent of 800,000 Austrians and Germans over the Balkans against Sarrail! Needless to say, Streit made the most of this alarming news. I asked the King, who was underlining the importance of some news from his irresponsible Minister in Berlin—it was now a matter of only 600,000 since the first telegram—if he did not think that it would be a difficult business in view of the single line of railway, and the few and very bad roads in Serbia and Macedonia, to supply such a formidable army with its requirements, to say nothing of the time it would take to reach our frontiers. His Majesty was not pleased at the question, and gave me no answer. Two weeks later,

Theotoky announced to the King that "for military reasons" only 300,000 men could be sent against Sarrail. We know that, in the end, merely a few German divisions were sent to the Macedonian front, and we know, furthermore, how they were received by the Allies and ourselves.

Had Streit not been bound heart and soul to the Triple Alliance, he would have had a unique chance, in May, 1914, of bringing off a master stroke by making discord between Austria and Italy, but as both powers were allied with Germany, he would not act against the interests of the Central Powers.

When he wrote his letter of the 12th September, 1917, to the *Secolo di Milano* about the coal supplied to the *Goeben* and *Breslau* during the war, he pretended to have forgotten or to have been ignorant of the action of his uncle at the Isthmus of Corinth.

In speaking to me one day of M. Veniselos, Streit said that he considered him a man of such mean account, that he would be sorry to have him for his secretary! I feel sure the President would not have said as much of Streit!

There were days when the King felt aware that he had taken a wrong turning, and was still pursuing it, and he was visibly preoccupied. Thus, on three different occasions, long after M. Veniselos had quitted office, he asked me, looking abstractedly at his watch:

"Is Veniselos there yet?"

He would speak now of M. Zaïmis and now of M. Skouloudis, but in spite of himself, his thoughts returned to another.

For some weeks I had ceased to speak of the return of M. Veniselos. I saw it was useless. The harm done had gone too far. I contented myself with drawing the King's attention to the most serious mistakes on the part of the new Ministers. I considered my duty to the King ended there. I despaired of Greece ; I was miserable thinking that I could do nothing further for my country ; my official duties ceased to interest me.

Nevertheless, on the 13th December, 1915, after having had to read through the innumerable letters addressed to the King, the greater part referring to the disastrous state of the country, I decided to submit for the last time a detailed report on the situation. Among these letters, some denounced the teaching imposed on the troops by order of the Staff, as being calculated to demoralize the men, damp their fighting spirit, and incite them against M. Veniselos, all matters having nothing to do with military training. There were detailed reports describing in the blackest colours the chaotic state of Greece in every department. I collected details and ascertained facts witnessing to the flagrant insufficiency of the government of the hour, and to the unprecedented moral breakdown which the Staff had brought about in the Army. I thought it my duty to speak to the King without further delay. I jotted down some notes to aid my memory, and went upstairs to His Majesty's private apart-

ments where an indisposition had kept him for some days.

I found him so pale and fatigued in appearance, that I thought it inopportune to submit to him any matters of grave importance, and so merely asked news of his health. But the King, whom nothing escaped, had seen my note-book, and saw that I was slipping it into my pocket, and asked what it was that I had in my hand. I said it was nothing and that I would not disturb him while he was feeling so weak.

“I certainly do not feel well at all, but all the same I want to know what it is.”

I still tried to escape, but he insisted. So I had to obey orders. I told him in as few words as possible my view of the deplorable condition of the country, but he insisted that I should read the memorandum I had put in my pocket. I did so. It was as follows :

“From many letters written from the Front, it appears that, by order, the men are given systematic instruction about the terrible effects of the German 40th field guns, of poison gas, and of the terror inspired by the German soldiers, before whom everything has to give way. Besides this, nothing is neglected that may excite political passion in the army. The *moral* of the troops is already greatly affected thereby.

“On the other hand, some officers and many soldiers threaten to ‘desert’ with their arms and go and fight against the Bulgarians if the Government allows the latter to penetrate further into our

territory. I have carefully destroyed these letters that I may not compromise the signatories, for the King knows that I share their sentiments, and I understand the motive which has made them act thus contrary to all discipline but with patriotic intent. The foregoing is to remind His Majesty that all the army does not share the view of the Government and of the Staff as he has been given to understand. It is for the King to weigh the great danger of the spirit that now reigns in the army. I have exact information that, by orders of the Headquarters Staff, some 200 soldiers from different garrisons had been detached 'for service and for safeguarding the King's person,' being a sort of secret police which goes about in mufti in Athens with orders 'to spy on society at home and abroad' and to protect the King against imaginary enemies. Some of these fulfil their functions so clumsily that they are already known and pointed out as police spies.

"Regiments have received orders from the Staff to forward to the War Office lists of soldiers who voted at the elections. Their officers demand their ballot-papers to discover if they have, or have not, voted, and to find out their political opinions.* This order is characterized as an illegal encroachment of the military authority on the right of soldiers considered as citizens. An anonymous letter, written in French, speaks of the numerous patrols which walk the streets of Athens night and day with fixed bayonets as 'a grotesque excess of zeal' on

* It was the time when the Veniselists abstained from voting at the last election.

the part of the General Staff and the Government, and as 'unworthy of the Royalist sentiment of the Athenian people and very prejudicial to the popularity of the King.'

"Another letter denounces the King as having written personally to General Papoulas to beg him to tell his brother to withdraw his candidature as deputy for Missolonghi 'since it might do harm to M. Stratos.' This step is characterized as an electoral interference on the part of the King, and publication is threatened. Another states that His Majesty said to the Editor of the *Embros* that if the Entente were victorious he would abdicate and leave Greece for good. The anonymous writer demands an 'official denial from the Marshalat,' otherwise he will publish his letter.

"*Mem.* : to tell the King that I continue to receive a quantity of letters and threats directed against his person. Others, on the contrary, offer to assassinate M. Veniselos, if the King so wishes. Many persons, military and political personages among them, counsel His Majesty to change his line of conduct altogether, to eliminate the Germanophile clique from his *entourage* and to save his throne and the nation.

"Here is the text of Sir Thomas Cunningham's letter to me to-day. He observes how little the King cares to receive the British Minister, who, on his side, does not like to insist. 'In Heaven's name remind His Majesty that he must receive Sir Francis Elliot. The King positively must see him as soon as possible, the situation of Greece is more than grave at the moment and will admit of no delay.'

“ Indeed, the situation is grave and so critical that I have considered it my duty no longer to conceal it from His Majesty.”

As I read on, I saw the King growing paler and paler. I was torn between two conflicting feelings, on the one hand sorrow at seeing him suffer so much, and I be the cause of it, and on the other the hope of making an impression upon him in the interests of the nation, at a moment when his feeble condition seemed to make him more sensible of the sombre realities I was describing to him.

When I had finished reading, he got up, went to the window, which looks out on to the Acropolis, and stood there, his hands behind his back, without saying anything for some moments. My heart beat with hope ; at that moment I felt that the fate of Greece was in the balance ; could I have succeeded ?

At length the King turned to me again ; his pallor was truly shocking, almost corpse-like, and with a sob in his voice he said, as though making a confession :

“ I know, but what can I do now ? ”

“ May I tell you, sir ? ”

“ Yes, tell me,” he said, like a drowning man clutching at a plank.

“ I will tell you, but not now. You are too tired, you want rest.”

“ Yes, it is true ; my head is going round and my knees fail me. I feel very weak. What I want,” he said with a sad smile, “ is a sick leave.”

I was touched. I took my departure and having

got back to my study I wrote the following letter, which I sent him early in the morning, after I had ascertained that he had passed a good night and that the doctor had allowed him downstairs.

“ Athens,

“ 14th December, 1915.

“ SIR,

“ You have done me the great honour of asking my advice on the situation which has now become so grave. I take the liberty to submit my opinion on the question to Your Majesty, in all humility. If Your Majesty should judge that what I have to say is in any degree inconsistent with the respect I owe to my Master and King, I beg that Your Majesty will destroy these pages, and only remember them as a proof of my sincere devotion.

“ The situation at home, now so critical, is but the result of our present foreign policy, which is in manifest opposition to the national feeling. No effort of the German propaganda has succeeded in shaking the inclination of Greece for the cause of the Entente, or in lessening the country's confidence in M. Veniselos. Your conviction as to the ultimate victory of Germany, and your confidence in the Kaiser, have already led Your Majesty to make sufficient sacrifice in their cause, and in favour of their arms. I believe that if you would adopt another tone to-day, the Emperor would recognize that the interests of Greece demand a different line of conduct from that pursued hitherto. Greece must follow her aspirations, and range herself fairly and squarely on the side of the Entente, whose

success is no longer doubtful, and which it is our duty and interest to aid with all our strength. The Kaiser will understand the delicate situation in which you are placed and see that you cannot do otherwise.

“ I will not abuse Your Majesty’s patience by dwelling on all that we have already lost by allowing Italy to precede us by her entry into the war, nor on the fact that Bulgaria has already taken sides, that Roumania is ready to come in, and that Serbia is crushed. Nor will I advert to the financial question, however essential.

“ It is to another matter that I will take the liberty to draw Your Majesty’s attention. You may see that no representative of the Entente Powers will now approach your Ministers. They address you directly. And on their part, your Ministers dare make no decision without consulting Your Majesty, thus throwing all responsibility on their King, who should bear none. In circumstances such as the present, such incapacity in a cabinet is a crime against the nation. These gentlemen have no end in view but their personal interests and passions.

“ You made use of an expression, Sir, this very morning, which moved me. You said that you felt yourself so ill, that you had need of ‘sick leave,’ and it is true. After a long illness you want rest. Instead of this, you must daily busy yourself with sorry details. You read in the greater part of the Press only threats, and bitter criticism of your policy. You are subjected to every kind of annoyance. Your Majesty may see for yourself the pit

that is opening beneath our feet. You have many counsellors, but none able or willing to show any means of arresting the fatal descent. Their fanaticism, on the contrary, engages you deeper still in party quarrels and electoral disputes.

“Tranquillity, and time for recovery, Sir, would be accorded you, had you at your side him who has never shrunk from any responsibility for the good of his country, who has never ceased, no matter what interested persons may say to the contrary, to look upon Your Majesty as indispensable to the welfare of Greece. Unhappily so deep a gulf has been dug between Your Majesty and M. Veniselos, that only the country’s grave danger, and a sincere appeal, could bring M. Veniselos back again.

“Change your policy entirely, Sir. Do not let yourself be hindered by family considerations. Pardon my boldness—but make light even of your self-esteem. Change the direction of affairs, Sir, while there is yet time. To-day the Bulgarians tremble before you. To-morrow it will be too late. Trust to the will and instinct of your people, and the people will be one with you, the Army will regain its moral, and who knows but that our dreams may be realized and we may yet see Your Majesty enter triumphantly into Byzantium, sword in hand.

“I am,

“Your Majesty’s etc. . . .”

This letter, which was solely dictated by love for my country and devotion to my King, was read by His Majesty that same day to his brother, Prince Nicolas, who considered, not the motive and

purpose of it, but dropped upon one thing only, and that was the neglect of ceremony which had allowed me to write on a single sheet "that looked as though it had been torn from a writing block!" That, at any rate, was what His Highness said next day at a reception, when speaking to the King about the letter, and all the ladies present joined in recriminations and spoke of the half sheet and of my impertinence in advising the King to recall the Traitor! These details I had from Mesdames C—— and M—— for, naturally, I did not attend that reception of the Grand Duchess Helena. Having been put on his dignity by Prince Nicolas, the King frowned on me for some days after this letter. I then submitted my resignation, which, as I have already said, was not accepted by His Majesty, but the Palace intrigues obliged me to persist in it. History will never pardon Constantine his implacable and unjustified hatred of M. Veniselos.

I remember one day after the first dismissal of M. Veniselos, the King, seeing me in bad humour about it, said :

"Do not look like that. One day yet I may act in concert with your Veniselos."

"No, sir," I replied, "never again. Those whose interest it has been to make you dismiss M. Veniselos from power, will henceforth exert themselves to deepen day by day the gulf between you."

Events, unhappily, proved me right.

Some days after that, walking in the garden with him, I asked him suddenly :

"Sir, do you regard Louis XIV. as a great man?"

“What a question! Why, he gave his name to his period.”

That is just what I wanted him to say. I then said to him that Louis, according to what one gathers from memoirs of the time, was but of mediocre intelligence, but that he was great because he had known how to surround himself with all that was great in France, and that the genius of all those great Frenchmen had been reflected in the King, and made him great in himself, as was the case with nearly all kings whom History reckons great. I then said that he, Constantine, had had a man near him who alone would suffice to immortalize him, but that he drove this man away from him instead of paying unquestioning heed to his counsels.

“You began well,” I said to him, “and had every chance of being a great king yourself and of having a glorious reign, but since the 6th March, all is over.”

“And now?” said the King, evidently painfully impressed.

“Now, sir, your name will perhaps go down to history, but not with glory.”

I did not finish my thought. I did not tell him that posterity would never pardon his headlong dealings with Bulgaria and Turkey, his mobilization of the army against M. Veniselos, because M. Veniselos wanted to fight the Turks and Bulgarians; or his having played the autocrat to Greece. No, I did not tell him all that. I dared not complete my thoughts, but I already heard whispered all round me the dreadful name, which will one day perhaps attach to Constantine when

the history of recent events becomes known. Alas ! he would have it so. I cannot repeat it too often, that advice was not lacking him.

On the 27th August, in a stirring speech from the balcony of his house, in the presence of an immense crowd, M. Veniselos uttered a final warning to the King. In an access of grief, he counselled the Athenians to form a deputation that should lay before the King the wishes of the people and of the nation. This deputation was haughtily refused a hearing by Constantine. On the night of the 11th-12th September, M. Veniselos, with a handful of faithful followers, left for Crete and set up a provisional Government.

It was war, declared, between the Idea incarnated in Veniselos, and the Brute Force of Imperialism represented by Constantine.

IV

THE KING AND THE ENTENTE

WHEN the war broke out, King Constantine was barely in touch with the Entente at Athens. Only the representatives of the Central Powers were in regular communication with him.

The French Minister at that time was M. Deville, a very cultured man. He was not, however, a man of the world; he detested Courts. He was at such small pains to hide his aversion for kings in general, that he rendered his relations with the Court, even though official, very difficult. Differences would arise that called for intervention by the President of the Council, and the Court Chamberlain would go to the French Legation to explain matters. Mercati, unfortunately, had neither the tact nor the intelligence to come out of it with credit to himself. All this did not help to create a sympathetic atmosphere for France in Athens. But I must do M. Deville the justice to say that he was one of the few diplomats who saw the course events were taking, more particularly as regards Bulgaria.

At the French Legation were two charming women, both admirable musicians: Vicomtesse

du Halgouët, the wife of the Chief Secretary, and Madame Braquet, the wife of the Military Attaché. These ladies held small and intimate receptions, where music was the chief feature, but they were not visited by the Court, with which relations were strictly official. As to General, then Colonel, Braquet, he was a most amiable man, but was too shy to know how to talk with a king. Thus there were absolutely no French people in touch with His Majesty.

The British Minister, Sir Francis Elliot, had a great liking for the King, but he also was shy, and a very silent man. He was of so retiring a disposition, that when I asked him to come and make up a Bridge party with the King, then the Prince Royal, on occasions when His Highness honoured my modest dwelling, Mon Refuge, I had to press him to the point of insistence, so fearful was he of being *de trop*. Later, during the war, every time I met Lady Elliot, I made her promise to invite the King to the Legation, but she confessed hesitation and fear of his refusal, because of his well-known Germanophile sentiments. But, whenever the King was invited, he was always delighted to go, and next day I would be thanked by Lady Elliot for the success that had attended her evening. The King loved to go out into Society.

But it is evident that this was not enough. The Entente Ministers seldom saw the King. On the other hand, the Ministers of the Central Powers, and the German Minister, above all, as well as their

Secretaries, particularly the German Military Attaché, Falkenhausen, came to the Palace on any and every pretext, and this led me to write to M. Romanos, our Minister in Paris, to beg him to suggest to the Quai d'Orsay that they should send a secretary or attaché to Athens who should be, beyond all things, a man of the world, and a man of means who could afford to keep open house, and, by constant receptions, give His Majesty a chance to frequent French society, and thus withdraw him in some measure from German influence.

When M. Guillemin was sent to replace M. Deville at Athens, it was already too late; the mischief was done, and the King's liking for the French steadily waned.

That which I had desired the Quai d'Orsay to do was done by the English Foreign Office, when they appointed Sir Thomas Cunningham Military Attaché to the British Legation at Athens. He was a man of the world, and both he and Lady Cunningham were most charming. But Sir Thomas made blunders. Thinking to disarm the General Staff, with the pro-German tendencies, he entertained them at dinner at the Hôtel d'Angleterre, with the praiseworthy intention of influencing them in favour of the Allies, and perhaps of penetrating their designs; but the reverse happened. It was he who was literally turned inside out, and his Government recalled him.

On this occasion His Majesty King George V. gave his cousin of Greece a valuable lesson in the

duties of a Constitutional Sovereign. It happened thus :

In pursuance of my designs to see King Constantine in touch as far as possible with the Entente Legations, I succeeded so well in making the Cunninghams welcome at Court, and they were so drawn to the King, that Sir Thomas on his return to London, it seems, always spoke in favour of the ex-King, for Constantine was then dethroned.

When the King learned that Cunningham had been recalled, he, in order to show his resentment against Sir Francis Elliot, whose fault he conceived it to be, asked him to lunch, privately, with the Royal Family, to mystify the British Minister, who had never received a similar honour. But Constantine did more than this. He went so far as to telegraph to His Britannic Majesty to request him to allow Sir Thomas to remain at Athens. His Britannic Majesty simply replied that it was a matter for his Ministers.

I often had occasion to say to Constantine that if ever a republican wind swept away all the kings of Europe, the only possible exception would be George V., who had every quality that a constitutional monarch should have. A king may have his preferences and opinions as any other man has, but he has no right to express them—anyhow, in public—for by so doing he risks falling from kingship to mere partisanship.

Speaking of George V., I cannot resist relating a small incident that took place at Athens, some

thirty years ago, at a reception given by the Comte de Montholon, then French Minister. His Majesty the King of England, then heir presumptive, and the late ill-starred Nicolas II., then Czarevitch, were present. At this time our Crown Prince, now ex-King Constantine, was just back from Berlin, where he had become engaged to the Kaiser's sister, the ex-Queen Sophia. The two cousins never ceased teasing him about his love affair with "sweet Sophia," and they carried this badinage to such a point that Constantine, exasperated by the continual chaff with which he was pursued everywhere, turned and said to me in Greek, very angrily: "Kick them out. I have had enough of this!" What an order to have to carry out—as I said to him—in respect of the future King of England and the Emperor of all the Russias! However, I managed to distract their attention from the wretched lover whom they had driven into a corner, and to transfer it to a pretty lady who happened, most opportunely, to pass by at that moment

I thought of this incident, that happened all those years ago, when some months since King George did me the great honour of conferring on me at Buckingham Palace the British Military Cross, which I am so proud to wear.

To turn again to the subject of the King's personal contact with the Ministers of the Entente Powers, I may say that the legation which entertained the most at Athens was that of Russia. Madame Demidoff played the hostess like a true Russian

princess, with a charm all her own, and a magnificence of hospitality worthy of her Royal guests. Demidoff himself had a weakness for crowned heads, as such, to the point of forgetting that he was the representative of a country at war with the Germans.

These receptions at the Russian Legation bring back to me a phrase used by that charming person, Princess Helena, the ex-King's daughter. Her Highness was always present at every festivity, but she only really enjoyed herself when she was with the King alone, for when the Queen was present it was quite another matter. To begin with, when Her Majesty was present, there was no dancing on account of the mourning for the recent death of George I. (so soon forgotten), and besides, the Queen, for reasons of health, retired punctually at eleven o'clock. One evening, the little princess, looking sadly at her watch, and not suspecting that with her much of the charm of the occasion would vanish, said :

“ You others can stay and amuse yourselves, but I shall have to go to bed in a few minutes.”

“ You are fond of society, madam ? ”

“ Yes,” she said with simplicity. “ I get that from papa,” as the song says, and it was true that when she left we would stay very late, to the very last. The King, when he had played a hand at Bridge, which he was very fond of, would go to the supper table ; this was the moment for courtiers and certain insatiably-snoobish ladies of quality, to crowd round the King, eager for a word or a hand-shake, and to pay their court.

Princess Helena's words, which I have just quoted, well expressed the King's predilection for society. It was almost a mania with him, and shows how right I was to insist that His Majesty should be given the chance of being the guest of the Entente Legations. In the course of my life I have often had occasion to note "that great events from trivial causes spring."

Comte Alexander Bosdari, the Italian Minister at Athens, is a man who is exceedingly learned, apt at his business, and an accomplished poet. He knew his Dante by heart, and loved to hear a pretty woman speak his verse at the foot of the Acropolis. He, like his colleague Sir Francis, was an old Athenian—we had known them both for twenty years as secretaries of legation. Comtesse Jeanne was as charming and witty as she was original in disposition.

Bosdari was too fervent an Imperialist for his post, and over and above that, an out and out Germanophile. He paraded his sentiments to such an extent as to say that his name was really Bosdaren, with the Germanic termination. Nor did he conceal his lack of sympathy with M. Veniselos—though he always showed him great respect—and he worked against him in secret. I don't know why, but I think it gave him an especial pleasure when, in December, 1916, he was instructed by his Government to declare to the Government of Athens that Italy would "take no hand in any coercive measure" having for its object the protection of Veniselists in fear of the *Epistrates*

(Reservists). In the eyes of an Imperialist such as he, M. Veniselos naturally was not the man.

It suited Italy to see Greece weak and divided, since it would allow her to fish in troubled waters and realize her aims in Albania and elsewhere. A Greece such as M. Veniselos dreamed of, great, strong and united, obviously would not be to her taste. The Governments of a Gounaris, a Skouloudis, a Zaïmis, or a Lambros, which would have allowed or even invited the Italians to come down as far as Preveza, would better have suited their turn, no doubt.

To come back to my old friend Alexander Bosdari, I may add that he pushed his devotion to Germany so far as to succeed Baron Schenk von Schweinberg in the affections of a pretty fair-haired lady.

There is no doubt that all Greece feels great joy in knowing that the important interviews which M. Veniselos has had with M. Nitti will, there is reason to hope, result in a sensible amelioration of relations between Greece and Italy in the future. I wish it with all my heart ; but I am afraid that I shall never entirely forget that there were days when I confounded the Italian, the Bulgarian and the Turk in a common hatred as enemies of my country. So much so, that in 1914, at the time of the disturbance in Epirus, the best Athenian society, save a few parasites such as may be found everywhere, boycotted Madame Bosdari's Thursday receptions. She even complained of my absence to the King, and he drew my attention to it. I had to yield, and attend them once more, and I know

that I did it with a good grace, because, personally, I liked the Bosdaris very much.

But too many reports passed through my hands on the conduct and doings of the Italians with regard to the Greek population in all territories of ours which they unlawfully occupied. I cannot sufficiently reprehend the brutal administration of General Ameglio in the Dodecannese. I still have a letter from Bosdari in which he asks me to tell the King, in whose name he thought that I was asking this favour, that General Ameglio regretted that he found himself obliged "for serious political reasons" to refuse permission for an unhappy father to return to Rhodes to see again his only daughter who was dying in hospital. This man, whose guilt was held to be so serious, came to see me at the Palace. I saw him myself; he was, indeed, what is termed a "criminal," which is why I went myself to Bosdari to intercede for him. The poor wretch, a Greek, had dared refuse to shout "Viva Italia!" at a demonstration at Rhodes arranged by Ameglio. He was therefore imprisoned, expelled the country and condemned for this "political crime" to have his only child die a lonely death in a foreign hospital.

To Italian Chauvinists and to that section of the Press which make great outcry, because, according to them, Greece has "received too much" because she has been given districts over which she had imprescriptible rights and where Italy had none, we may simply reply: That if Greece did not enter earlier into the struggle against Germany, it was solely due to ex-King Constantine. She at least

went in unconditionally, without any secret pact. M. Veniselos, on the contrary, persistently called upon the King to abandon his neutrality when the Germans were at the very gate of Paris, and that, I repeat, without conditions; it was the very charge made against M. Veniselos by the King, as well as by his adversaries, for "lack of foresight!" Events have shown that his belief in France and England was fully justified.

I was in a position to know that several weeks before the signature of the secret Treaty the Italians were furious with M. Veniselos because of the possibility that the decision of Greece would oblige them also to quit their neutrality. They were afraid of being forestalled by us; that they were not, they may thank Constantine.

What is the use of recriminations?

Of the representatives of the Central Powers I say nothing.

The Count von Quadt and the Count von Mirbach and, above all, M. von Szilaczy, the Austrian Minister, showed great proof of tact in carefully avoiding anything like a diplomatic incident with their colleagues. On the whole, in neglecting nothing that would create belief at Athens of the coming German victory, the Kaiser's Ministers only did their duty to their country and one cannot blame them. The fault lay in those who believed them.

One might say something about the rather comic zeal displayed by the Count von Quadt in running up the German flag every morning on the balcony

of the Legation each time the German Armies scored one of their even imaginary successes.

The French Legation, situated a few steps away, on the same avenue, showed far more dignity in making no response to displays as insolent as they were useless, until the day came when it could proudly unfurl the glorious colours of France to celebrate the crowning victory.

But, I repeat, no grave reproach attaches to von Quadt, who, as a good German, regularly informed me, with a knowing and confidential air every time we met at the Club, that the Emperor would enter Paris the next day or, at latest, the day after.

The word "blunder" has been too often employed in speaking of the policy of the Entente during the war. I believe that to-day the author of these blunders will not deny them, but I will say, once and for all, that if I in turn have taken the liberty to use this expression occasionally, it is in no way because I wish to exonerate the King and his evil counsellors who knowingly did so much harm to the Greek cause. But can one write anything on the events with which I am now dealing without dwelling on the fact that during this terrible war, and especially in matters which were of prime importance for Greece, in the desperate struggle between the real head of a constitutional Greece, and a King who had stepped down from his throne to become a party chief and furious adversary of M. Veniselos, the Entente has often, only too often, by its mistakes, made the task of the latter more than difficult? The Entente Powers often acted favourably

to the ex-King who was so directly hostile to them, so much so that whenever the King's actions made it necessary for them to make him conscious of the iron hand in the velvet glove, certain fanatics came to consider him as a martyr King drinking the cup of bitterness and humiliation. People wondered sometimes if the only purpose of the Entente policy in the Balkans were not to maintain a Germanophile King on the throne as adversary to the Ententophile Veniselos.

I will not weary the reader with dates and the dry history of facts already known in chancelleries interested therein. I will pass over these events. I only wish to convince the reader that it was not wholly and solely the fault of Greece that she did not intervene at the very beginning.

First, I must quote a fact that is not sufficiently known. One day, it was, I remember, in 1914, before the Battle of the Marne, when it seemed to be all over with France, I went in to the King just as M. Veniselos was leaving. His Majesty was so agitated and preoccupied that he did not seem to follow what I said to him. Closing my portfolio, I said respectfully to the King that I would return when he was less absorbed by other matters. Whereupon, as if to explain his preoccupation, the King, speaking with violence, and pointing with his forefinger at the door by which the President had just made his exit, said: "What in the world do you think Veniselos has just been here to say—a thousand to one you don't guess! He comes here and proposes to me that we should

immediately fall in with the Allies, when, in all probability, Wilhelm will be in Paris to-morrow!"

Certainly the Germans had never been so near it before. The Uhlans were almost at the city gates, and the whole world was waiting in agony to hear at any moment the fatal news that the Boches had entered the Capital of France, I should say the Capital of the World. And, indeed, had it not been for the magnificent awakening of the French spirit, it would, of a truth, have been all over with France.

The King continued angrily and indignantly: "And to-day Veniselos comes to say that now is the moment for little Greece to strike an attitude and pay her debt to France and England by allying herself with them." And, as if rendered furious by my silence, he added: "What do you say to this folly?"

I answered, as ever, that I would not pretend to discuss purely military matters with him; but that I would say once again that I had unlimited confidence in the President's foresight and grasp of affairs. With the familiarity born of constant intimacy, the King called me a madman and an idiot, said I was bewitched, and vehemently declared that he would never march with the Allies, for the simple reason that the Germans had already won the day.

To this I made reply that, if I was mad, it was a quality I shared with nine-tenths of Greece, and if I was mistaken it was in company with all those foreign statesmen who held a very different opinion of M. Veniselos from his. And so a madman I proposed to remain and to march along with them.

The same night I dined in company with M.

Veniseles at M. Benachi's, a former Mayor of Athens, who was so badly treated by the *Epistrates* in 1916. I asked the Prime Minister whether it was true that he had pressed such views on His Majesty, and whether he did not fear the entry of the Germans into Paris.

"Yes," he said, "it may well happen, and a great misfortune it would be for France and for the whole world. But it would not necessarily mean that France was beaten. So long as the English and French armies maintain close contact, I have no fear for France. And besides, now that the Allies are in danger it is our duty to go to their aid."

And with a note of conviction that was almost prophetic, M. Veniseles added these simple words: "The Entente will conquer." As I know, he repeated the same words of consolation and encouragement to many a Frenchman in Athens, restoring a confidence waning even in them. M. Veniseles has always shown hitherto that he merited the confidence he could inspire.

What I have here set down is but further evidence of the unshakable faith that M. Veniseles had in the Entente; it affords an answer to those who would dare to reproach Greece with having hung back from the conflict. The delay was the work of but one man alone, and even he could not hold us back to the end.

On the 4th August, 1914, the Kaiser sent for our Minister at Berlin and told him that he might officially inform King Constantine that an Alliance had been definitely concluded on that day between

Germany and Turkey, and gave him to understand, moreover, that certainly Bulgaria, and perhaps Roumania, would range themselves on the side of the Central Powers.

I will not dwell on the pressure exerted on Greece to quit her neutrality every time that the co-operation of our small but valuable army seemed necessary to the Entente. I am sure that the men who directed the policy of France and England will frankly acknowledge that they were, at times, merely actuated by considerations of self-interested opportunism in their dealings with Greece. If the policy of a Gounaris, of a Skouloudis, often seemed, as well it might, tricky towards the Entente, Greece, on her part, may charge the Entente with not having been always frank with her.

What a different course events might have taken if the Allies had had Greece with them from the beginning! And it required so little to obtain it, if justice be a little thing!

Instead of plainly declaring themselves in favour of the just claims of Greece, the Entente shuffled continually, threw out feelers unceasingly, tried to reconcile the irreconcilable, and blew hot and cold without even coming to a decision; now threatening, now coaxing Greece, now flattering the Bulgarians, letting the Turkish fleet take over the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, at our expense naturally, and even allowing the world to suppose that the fate of Salonica, after the war, would have to remain in suspense. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that without the *coup d'Etat* of M. Veniselos, it

might, at times, have gone hard with the Allied Expedition to Salonica.

No, the Entente policy failed in the East as much towards Greece as towards Serbia, who was not allowed to fall on the Bulgarians at the propitious moment, because of the perpetual fear of "offending" Bulgaria, which ended by allowing Bulgaria to destroy Serbia.

Even after our national uprising at Salonica, even after M. Veniselos had set up the provisional Government, we encountered every sort of difficulty in arriving at a good understanding with the Entente. First of all, the Boulogne Conference of October, 1916, refused to recognize us. After a thousand tergiversations, the Government of National Defence was finally recognized, but only on the express condition that the movement should not have an anti-dynastic character. And yet, as I have said over and over again, M. Veniselos laid it down as indispensable for the welfare of Greece that kingly government should continue for many years to come. But the Entente Powers, by a declaration in which they seemed to fancy it was they who were imposing this condition on M. Veniselos, only raised discussion and sophistical arguments on the impossibility of recognizing two royalist governments in Greece.

The manifest object of all this bolstering up of Constantine was the chimerical hope of winning him over from the German cause, and putting him at the head of the National movement. It was not until after the terrible events of 1916 that the

Entente consented to open its eyes to the facts, though even then it did not altogether give up hope in spite of the circumstantial reports of Sarrail who, from the outset, had demanded the dethronement of Constantine, a dethronement only effected two years later. The Allies decided then that they would no longer openly support a King who looked for a German triumph, and at last determined to grant official recognition to the Government at Salonica. France and England sent as representatives Lord Granville and M. de Billy, who to-day have the honour to represent their respective Governments at the Court of King Alexander. Russia alone sent no accredited representative to M. Veniselos.

So, after the great initial mistake in regard to Serbia, after suffering disappointment in Turkey, and committing a third and still more serious blunder in regard to Bulgaria, the Entente persisted, deliberately, in making a final and equally grave error in endeavouring to obtain the good-will of Constantine. This sums up in a few words the Allied policy in the Near East.

And yet, when I left the King's service in 1915, I told the Entente Ministers at Athens, when they asked me my reasons for resignation, that they might inform their Governments that Constantine would never, never, I insisted, throw in his lot with the Allies. The harm was already done. The King, the Court, the Staff, and part of the country and Press were already Germany's. The German propaganda had done its work with its customary thoroughness.

I have mentioned the General Staff. I will say, whatever some may think, that at the outbreak of the war, the General Staff (with the exception of certain officers, who had had their training in Germany) were favourable to the Entente, and the King himself would not have dared to adopt a different attitude.

As for the Royal Family, they were all, with the exception of the Queen, favourable to the Allied cause, and some of the Royal princes would speak disrespectfully of the Queen as "l'Allemande" until the day came when "l'Allemande" succeeded in drawing them all over to her side against M. Veniselos and the Cause.

How often the King, in speaking to me of the Allies, would call them "θι φίλοι σου οι κουτόφραγκοι." These words can hardly be exactly translated, but for those who know modern Greek, they will express exactly what the King and his Staff thought of the Allies.

It is not worth while mentioning the Court. It obeyed with docility the very gestures of its master, and blindly followed his orders.

As for the various different Governments which followed one another under Prime Ministers who were not even fit to sit in village councils, they were not of a kind to formulate policies of their own. The King governed, and Streit and Dousmanis governed the King.

When I was talking with the King, and defending the cause of the Entente, at the time when Russia, who turned an unfavourable eye on our possible entry into the war, had succeeded in making the

Allies refuse M. Veniselos' offer to put the Greek army at their disposition at once, how often he would say to me :

“ Why would you have us abandon our neutrality ? You can see for yourself that Russia does not want us, so that if we act we shall only be pulling her chestnuts out of the fire ; what, therefore, is the good ? ”

It was true, unfortunately, and I could say nothing. M. Sazonoff had categorically refused the support of Greece in 1914. In 1915, when, contrary to the prognostications of our own Staff, it looked as though the Dardanelles operations would succeed, and Constantinople fall to the Allies, M. Sazonoff already began to arrange the details of the ceremony to be celebrated in the Byzantine Cathedral of St. Sophia. This, I think, makes an excellent companion story to the tale of the luncheon ordered for the Kaiser in Paris on a given date. I will further add that the Russian Government had not only refused, in its arrangements, the entry of our troops into the ancient Greek capital, but rigorously debarred any Greek demonstration whatever at this historic ceremony that was to take place in a city which has been eminently Greek in feeling, and population, and, above all, in history, for more than eleven centuries !

But the King was not sincere when he pretended to be in ignorance of the fact that the Russian Government, yielding to British pressure, was shortly afterwards disposed to accept our co-operation. It will be impossible for the King to allege that the amazing refusal of the Hellenic Government to accept the offer of Cyprus made to them by England

had not, in turn, prevented Russia from displaying her antipathy to Bulgaria by making an official declaration to Greece concerning Thrace, which had been promised us. This pretext of the King had no basis in fact, any more than any of the others to which he had recourse in order to find some sort of justification for his policy and his inertia.

The King's view of the Constantinople question could not but find favour in Greece among those who were ignorant of the truth. He said he was unwilling to abandon his neutrality in order that Constantinople might be one day Greek, as the Kaiser cunningly insinuated.

As far as I am concerned, my aspirations as a Greek would be satisfied for the time being if M. Sazonoff would admit that St. Sophia was never Slav any more than Turkish, and still less Italian as some have recently claimed! St. Sophia is Greek, and if there is any justice in the world, will remain so.

As I am speaking of Constantinople, I will make mention of an audience granted by the King to a rich banker of that city, which will disclose another pretext of Constantine's for not marching against the Turks. He was always seeking pretexts to explain and justify himself for remaining neutral against the wish of the nation and in spite of the feverish and despairing expectations of the unredeemed Hellenism watching in anguish the arrival of the fleet and army of deliverance. Accordingly, His Majesty was delighted when M. Z—— told him that the mere declaration of war on our part would

mean a terrible massacre of Greeks in Constantinople and all over Turkey. The King did not grasp that M. Z——, in saying so, spoke less as a patriot than as financier with interests in Turkey; and His Majesty employed this novel and Gallacian argument in the course of a conversation he held the same day, saying with a knowing air:

“If we declare war, there will be massacre in Constantinople; I have the most precise information on the point.”

Being aware of these notions of M. Z—— (he had developed them the evening before in my presence at the Hôtel de la Grande Bretagne), and knowing that the King had received him that morning, I could easily guess whence he had got this “precise information.” Despite what I said to the King, of what we knew by experience of Turkish government, of the notorious heads of the Committee of “Union and Progress,” Enver, Talaat, Djemal, and the rest of them, how they—like all races refractory to civilization—were as cowardly in subjection as they were arrogant in domination; notwithstanding all the things called to mind in connection with the wars of 1897 and 1912, when the Turkish population of Epirus, Macedonia and Asia Minor put themselves under our protection against their own compatriots, the King would not hear a word, and always took refuge in the sham patriotism of M. Z——. The result, alas, was not long in coming. No sooner were the leaders of the Young Turks assured that Constantine would not move against them, than they ordered, at the bidding of the German Staff, the destruction of the flourishing Hellenism

of Asia Minor and Thrace by forced deportations *en masse*. "So long as there are Greek schools and church bells, you will never be masters," said Liman von Sanders to the leaders of the assassinations. Hundreds of thousands perished from cold, fatigue and privation. They who saw these things done, witnessed these scenes not to be described, the ruin and suffering both during the deportation and during the Bulgarian invasion of Macedonia—all due personally to the King and Skouloudis' Government—will never pardon the Constantine faction. The veritable butchers of these innumerable victims were not only the Turks and Bulgarians, but their allies in Athens and Berlin.

I had nothing further to say, and the King ended the discussion by saying :

"You must allow that England prefers Bulgaria to ourselves."

It was the fact that England only believed the information given her by Bouchier, Buxton and others. The English Government never trusted any but their own agents, and never took the trouble to look for the motives that inspired them. While England continued her flirtations with Bulgaria, I myself kept the English Minister informed of the fortifications proceeding in the Dardanelles, which were executed by Germans, with the assistance of the Bulgarians, who had put their railways and rolling-stock at their disposal, and also helped them to put together their submarines at Cavalla. I remember even giving Sir Francis the numbers of the Bulgarian munition wagons, which, at given

dates, had transported German munitions and guns, in order to prove the exactitude of the information supplied by our Minister at Sofia, and to give him the chance of verifying the fact. On another occasion, I gave him information of the exact emplacement of certain German and Turkish batteries on the coast of Asia Minor. I had subsequently the great satisfaction of knowing that they had been completely destroyed by the British fleet.

Long before that, lunching one day in June, 1915, at the Club, with Mr. Erskine, counsel to the Embassy, I told him that our Military Attaché at Constantinople had informed our Government that there were German officers in Bulgaria admitted on an official footing, to manage the installation of the wireless telegraph. And, indeed, shortly afterwards, the wireless was working between Athens and Berlin, via Sofia; thanks to it, the German submarines were enabled to pursue the *Hesperia*, with M. Veniselos on board, in the Ægean Sea in September, 1916. In giving the representatives of the Entente this information, I hold that I was in no way betraying the secrets of my service. I had loyally declared in high places that I should impart to the Allies all and everything that could help them in their struggle against the Turks and Bulgars. In helping France and England I had the feeling that I was helping my country. The King knew this; my conscience does not reproach me.

Apropos of the Bulgarian tendencies of British policy, I will give an instance incredible for English loyalty. I was told in February, 1916, of an English

officer in high command who received orders at Salonica to go to Athens and ask for an audience of the King, and make a certain declaration to him incompatible with his duty as a soldier. This declaration, transmitted as it might have been, by Constantine to Berlin, would have gravely compromised the Allies, and one trembles to think of the irreparable consequences that this information might have had for the armies in the East, and indirectly on the issue of the war. But, to the honour of the English General, I may say that he "forgot" to mention to the King any word of his extraordinary mission. This officer was too much a soldier to "remember" it. His visit to the King was accordingly limited to a simple act of courtesy to the Sovereign of a country on whose soil they were fighting. Moreover, at that time, Sarrail had paid a similar visit to the King. I cannot help adding that the British troops, in the assaults of 1917 and 1918 were of the same mind as their General, for, despising the tricks of politicians, they fought ever like brave men.

Apropos of General Sarrail's visit, I may say that on his return I went to see him at Salonica, to gather his impressions of his journey to Athens. I learned, among other things, that the King being indisposed on that day—was it the case?—had received him in his apartments on the first floor, and, when he had taken his leave, and was about to quit the suite of rooms where he had had his audience, he mistook the door; he found himself suddenly confronted with a female form behind it.

From his description of her features, it could only have been the ex-Queen Sophia. I was told subsequently that the Count von Mirbach, German Minister at Athens, was then with the ex-Queen, in order to overhear what the French generalissimo had said to the King.

It seems that this kind of espionage, though quite unknown in my day, was brought to some perfection later on, for Mrs. Kenneth Brown, in her excellent "German Intrigues in Greece," speaks of certain screens placed in the King's cabinet itself, on the ground floor, behind which Streit and others could exercise with ease their ignoble functions. This fact alone is sufficient proof of the state of dependence into which the King had fallen, and is evidence of the weight of the guiding hand that rested so heavily upon him.

To come back to the attitude of the Entente at Athens, I may say that when the provisional Government had been for some time installed at Salonica, and we were doing our best to raise battalions and send them into the lines, the allied military missions in Athens, out of deference to the King, put every difficulty in the way of officers and men who wished to join. Two of my nephews, youths under eighteen years of age, who wished to enrol themselves as volunteers in the army of National Defence, were arrested and thrown into prison, and might have been massacred by the police agents of the Constantine faction had they not, as the Town Commandant said cynically to my sister-in-law, been recognized just in time.

At that moment it must unhappily be said that the agents of Constantine were upheld and assisted by the Foreign Military Mission. It would be interesting to know from these gentlemen whence came their orders and how they were worded. Eternal contradictions !

I will cite a fact that dates from before the war, but which will exhibit the attitude of France at the time with regard to the Turks. On the 25th June, 1914, a French engineer, M. S——, arrived from Cydonia, a Greek town in Asia Minor, was given audience by the King, and told him pitiful details of massacres and deportations *en masse* of the Hellenic population, at the instigation, as I said before, of the German Staff. This gallant Frenchman saved, if only for a time, alas ! many families of our fellow countrymen by putting them under the protection of the French flag. The King gave him the well-deserved decoration of the Order of the Saviour for services rendered. I begged M. S—— to publish, as soon as he arrived in Paris, an account of what he had seen with his own eyes ; he promised he would do so, but that he had always been informed that publications of the sort were “ not politic.” I learned later on that he encountered the same refusal on his arrival in Paris. It would never do to annoy the poor Turks by publishing truths about them which might do them harm in civilized countries. The result of this policy is that to-day Turkey, though beaten, raises an insolent head, and can still employ threats. She has full confidence in the foreign capitalists.

That Russia upheld Constantine against Veniselos is comprehensible. The ex-King would not fight. Had he done so, we should, in all probability, have taken Constantinople without striking a blow; which would not have suited Russia. I will pass over in silence the family alliances which united certain Courts with ours, and the pressure exerted by their means in favour of the ex-King. That Italy execrated M. Veniselos, and consequently gave support to a King whose policy ensured disorder and discord in Greece, was in accordance with her Machiavellian policy. But that England and France should have lent support to a monarch so frankly hostile is inexplicable. And this incomprehensible attitude was maintained, not only up to the day when this unlucky King was detached from the destinies of Greece, but even after his dethronement. It was even said that up to the very last there was a General of one of the Entente Powers at Athens with the special mission of seeing that Constantine was not dethroned. This story does not sound to me very probable, but the attitude maintained by the Entente was such as to make people believe anything.

At the moment when I write these lines, the English papers announce that a Turcophile member of Parliament, taking up the defence of the Turks in spite of the recent massacres of Armenians at Marash in Cilicia, has questioned Mr. Lloyd George about the massacres supposed to have been committed at Smyrna at the time of the landing of our troops in May, 1919. I do not know what the

Prime Minister may reply, but I may tell the honourable member, whose emotion is awakened by some sixty victims, but not by those of some hundreds of thousands, that when troops enter a town in marching order with their arms at the slope, and they are fired on from the houses by concealed cowards, their officers perform not merely a rightful act but a positive duty when they order their men to use their arms to avenge the outrage. Maybe the Allied command, aware of the secular hatred of the two races, should have taken precautionary measures before allowing the debarkation. In any case, this member of Parliament might have taken into consideration that the Greeks in Asia Minor have suffered horribly from the Turks for five centuries and more, and that among the soldiers there may well have been some whose parents, sisters or children had been tortured by them. Far be it from me to defend a handful of soldiers who so far lose control of themselves as to commit reprisals ; I do not dream of excusing acts so absolutely reprehensible as to call for questions in the House of Commons. I only wish to help towards an understanding.

An English naval officer who was attached to the English naval mission at Constantinople before the war said to me that he had always liked the Turks. I might almost say as much, for I have found some of them very amiable ; nevertheless, those very Turks were own brothers to those systematic murderers.

Briefly to recapitulate : If the Entente had accepted the Greek proposals at the outset, the

war would certainly have ended two years sooner than it did, millions of lives would have been spared, much misery, mourning and tears. We need not have had recourse to America, precious as her aid may have been, and, furthermore, the horror of Bolshevism would have been avoided, for Germany would not have had time to arouse and organize it in Russia.

Neither Germany nor her allies have been crushed as they should have been. They have not as yet felt the weight of defeat as heavy on them as it should be for having let loose this frightful war. I remember, on the 28th September, 1918, when I was at the front, seeing a car pass containing the Bulgarian emissaries, accompanied by the American Secretary at Sofia, who went with them to Salonica, while Mr. Murphy, the Chargé d'Affaires, was to await the issue of the parleyings at Sreti-Vrach. Two mornings after, at dawn, just when the Derbyshire Yeomanry, to whom I had asked to be temporarily attached, was about to charge certain Bulgar-Boche artillery positions, on the Petritsi side, and when we already had our foot in the stirrup, word came from General Briggs to Colonel Nielson ordering the cessation of all hostilities, as an armistice had been signed with Bulgaria, who had surrendered at discretion. It came just as the troops, full of spirit, hoped that very morning to cut off the retreat of the Bulgarians in the defiles of Kresna.

Reading the order, I could not but connect it with the meeting of two days before. I then had a feeling that what was in the air was an inopportune and unfortunate intervention in favour of

Bulgaria to the extent of being willing to even sign an immediate peace, in the hope of securing her support against Turkey. It was just what M. Veniselos so rightly feared when he told the King of his fears lest Bulgaria should be substituted for ourselves at the side of the Entente Powers.

The attempt has, of course, been made to throw the whole crime on the King of Bulgaria, in order to diminish his people's responsibility. But why could not Bulgaria do what Greece did? Why did she not rise against her King?

When I went to take my leave of General Sir Charles Briggs the same day, I did not hide from him the bitterness I felt, and I said that the only wish I could give expression to at the moment was that the Allies might not commit the same mistakes on the Western front. Just as the armies of the East were prevented from signing the armistice at Sofia or even Constantinople, so in the West conditions were not imposed in Berlin. The consequences are with us to-day. And the last word has yet to be said!

Where now are the fine precepts of Napoleon, who said that a peace, to be durable, must be signed before the cannon were silent. When the Peace of Versailles was signed, the cannon were still sounding, it is true, but too far away to be heard at Versailles.

To turn again to the Macedonian frontier; bitter reflections are bound to arise when one thinks of what might have been, had the armies at the outset marched into Sofia and thence on to Constantinople.

Would not the old and thorny Eastern question have been solved automatically at a blow? Could there have been a more propitious occasion? Would the Turk to-day, aping his German master, be raising his head once more and that with threats?

Yes, had the Allies shown more perspicacity at the outset—good advice had not been wanting—had they frankly supported Greece, all would have been different, and there would not now be so many menacing problems waiting for future solution.

And what was needed to realize this dream? A touch of decision, and a few Anglo-French divisions in Macedonia, and before embarking them, the winning of the confidence of Greece by a straightforward policy which would have avoided any dalliance with Bulgar or Turk.

How many times, supported by General Danglis, have I not tried to excite King Constantine's ambition by making him see himself in imagination in supreme command of the war in the Balkans and the glorious rôle reserved for him in the history of the world if he entered, at the head of his whole army and of the French and British troops, as victor into Byzantium?

The Entente would hear of nothing and know of nothing. And yet, at the time, as I have already said, there was no feeling for Germany in Greece. At the Crown Council all the party leaders pronounced for the Entente. Colonel Metaxas had worked out a plan of attack on the Dardanelles. Bulgaria would have been crushed or obliged to give way without bargaining or compensation. Serbia would still be on her feet and could have

engaged Austria. Roumania, hesitating in view of her exposed geographical position, need have hesitated not a moment longer. The Dardanelles could never have been fortified by the Turks. Our fleet supported merely by some Allied squadrons could have shown itself at the Golden Horn. Germany would have been crushed early in the day instead of being able to draw on Asia Minor for the immense resources which prolonged the struggle. Italy would have had to declare herself earlier. The problem of Islamism would not have been so menacing to-day. Financial and social problems would have been much easier to solve. Constantine might have given away his German Field-Marshal's baton.

No one can say that I am wise after the event ; M. Veniselos foresaw it all, wrote it all to the King (I have his letters), foretold it all to the diplomats. Yes, the dream might have become a reality.

Apropos of dreams, I will quote a sally of M. Veniselos' addressed to a lady, who, one evening, was teasing him on what she called the new passion for bridge he had developed since he had left office.

"Madam, if I did not play bridge, I should be writing, and studying at the present moment, but occasionally I feel the necessity for rest. When I do nothing, I cannot help thinking, and when I think, I cannot but dream of the position our country might be occupying now if the King had applied the policy I advocated, and when I think of that and see what I see to-day, I feel as if I should go mad. But, mark you, madam, were I to go mad,

I should put King Constantine and his supporters in the right, for they say that I am an idealist and a visionary and that the dreams I cherish for my country are the dreams of a madman. Now, madam, you understand," he said sadly, "that I am not even at liberty to go mad."

No, a hundred times no, the dream was not the dream of a madman, events have proved it.

In writing the preceding remarks, it has not been my intention to accuse the Entente, nor uselessly to lament the irrevocable past. Still less, would I, in imputing wrong to others, lessen the responsibility of the ex-King. No mistake on the part of the Allies can justify their criminal conduct. Small and weak though it may be, a country must submit to the law of the stronger while doing its duty without fail and preserving its self-respect. Moreover, resignation is the dignity of the weak. But what was asked by Greece was not to submit to the law of the stronger as the Constantinians would have had it believed, but by lending her support to the Allies, to follow her aspirations and realize her National ideals. In writing these pages I have but one thought and one aim : to defend my country against accusations that are often unjust and to try to prove that Greece was not so much in the wrong as some people would lightly make out.

I cannot say often enough that if I refer so bitterly, and sometimes, perhaps, so harshly, to the mistakes in the policy of the Allies in the East, and especially as regards Greece at the beginning of the

war, it is not in defence of the ex-King. Had I the will to defend him, I should recoil before the overpowering weight of facts.

Can it be denied, can he himself deny it, that he was the ally of the Turks and Bulgarians in the war? And that said, what else is there to say? Can his defenders deny that Enver Pasha said in council, in March, 1915, to the Turkish Ministers, that they could count with "certainty" on King Constantine? Can they deny that the Turkish Press regarded the return of M. Veniselos in the May elections of 1915 as a disaster for Turkey? They cannot deny it. And his defenders would never dare to plead at the bar of History did they know that when the — regiment of infantry, in which the Constantine faction founded great hopes, arrived on the Lioumnitsa front, the Bulgarians, who knew this from their spies, raised the cry of "Long live King Constantine" from their front trenches in the hope of breeding disaffection among troops thought to be faithful to the King. But the King's name meant little by that time to Greek soldiers. They knew their duty when they found themselves face to face with their old enemies.

My fixed belief that Constantine would have acted if the Entente had handled him skilfully, leads me to relate the following :

On the 19th April, 1915, His Majesty called me to give me a telegram received from Prince George of Greece, and his reply thereto written by himself in my presence. On the 14th, the Greek Government, giving up its point that Bulgaria must come

also into the war, declared itself disposed to abandon the neutrality on condition that the territorial integrity of Greece should be guaranteed for a period extending beyond the war, in view of the danger from Bulgaria that would directly menace us. M. Briand considered we were asking too much. The Greek Government then offered the co-operation of its fleet, reserving its army to guard against eventualities with Bulgaria.

M. Delcassé replied, expressing his fears of "offending" Bulgaria. Then it was that Prince George cabled from Paris to the King, reproaching him with putting difficulties, as he said, in the way of the Entente. I regret that I have not the Prince's telegram by me, but I can give the reply written off-hand by King Constantine. When I pointed out to the King that Prince George might hand it on to M. Delcassé, and that its style was not exactly diplomatic, the King forbade me to alter a word. Here is the telegram :

" 19th April, 1915.

" To the Greek Minister at Paris, per Prince George.

" I beg of you to let M. Delcassé know that he gravely mistakes our point of view. It is altogether inexact that we are indisposed to abandon our neutrality at any price. It would be stupid to hold the opinion that the Powers were not sufficient guarantee against Bulgaria. But the war once ended, Bulgaria, who, we are persuaded, will remain neutral, will then profit by our weakness and her undiminished strength to avenge herself on us and take the territory she covets, when

the solidarity of the Entente exists no longer. Europe does not understand or take into account the psychology of Bulgaria. Moreover, I protest with all my strength against the insinuation that we wish to drag the Powers into a war against Bulgaria. We are, above everything, honest, and I beg that M. Delcassé will not forget it.

(Signed) "CONSTANTINE R."

Giving me his minutes to be put into cipher, minutes written with his own hand, and still in my possession, he said with a bitterness that revealed his sincerity at the moment—unless I was deceived like so many others—but that I do not believe :

"The Allies will not understand that it is not merely a moral support that I offer them, but an effective support, the support of an army and a fleet ; but, for that, I must have my hands free as regards Bulgaria."

At that time the King would have acted with the Allies could he have appeared to do so of his own initiative, and without seeming to yield to the policy laid down by M. Veniselos. His fear of Bulgaria was well founded, but did not last, any more than his indignation with M. Delcassé, who had dared to doubt the honesty of his intentions. The Bulgarians became his allies, and his honour, alas ! he trampled under foot.

I cannot close this chapter on the King and the Entente without doing homage to the memory of George I. for the advice he gave, from the grave,

one may say, to the ex-King in favour of the Allies.

The day the Minister of France in Athens came to the Palace to announce the declaration of war, I repeated to His Majesty, though none of us then expected what was going to happen, the following words of the King, his father :

“ If once Europe in its entirety makes war on France and England, little Greece can have no other place than at their side.”

Unfortunately, I forget the name of my informant, to whom King George I. addressed these words. If these pages come under his perusal, I shall be grateful if he will remind me of his identity.

V

THE KING'S ILLNESS

ALL sorts of fairy stories have been told about the King's illness in 1915. It was said to be a diplomatic illness. It was said that Queen Sophie, during a violent discussion in which she took Germany's side, had stabbed the King in the breast with a dagger, in fine, all sorts of nonsense of that kind. Such stories are absolutely untrue. Constantine was really ill, very seriously ill, and, at times, at death's door.

I believe I know how the King caught his illness. It was at the house of Madame Stratos,* a true Valkyrie, she might be called the Egeria of the Epistrates. Her husband had always held but one creed, an immoral opportunism without a shadow of patriotism. He was at that time a Minister in the Gounaris cabinet after having also been in M. Veniselos' cabinet, from which he had been removed.

It was very hot indoors that evening and very cold outside. Twice His Majesty, on the ground that it was too hot, prevented me from closing the window which had just been imprudently opened at his back, as, keeping close to the piano, he talked

* It was at this evening party that I had the interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of which I have spoken above.

with Madame Nadine Schlieman, another Epistratian fury, a renegade Frenchwoman married to a pro-German Greek, the son of the eminent German archæologist. Three days later the King experienced the first symptoms of the illness from which he was to suffer so long, infectious pleurisy.

Not only is it absolutely untrue that the Queen had, as was pretended, struck him, but quite on the contrary, she nursed him with untiring devotion night and day during long weeks, in spite of the weakened state of her own health at that time. The invalid would only take his medicine from his Sophy's hand. She passed her days seated at his bedside, and the nights lying dressed on a small sofa at the foot of the bed. During his illness the King one day asked for me; on my entering his room, the Queen, perhaps through discretion, but probably also because she cordially detested me, rose brusquely at my approach and left the room, taking her work with her. Yet, nevertheless, I had nothing but admiration at that moment for her devoted nursing, which, however, thanks to her extraordinary iron will, did not prevent her, perfect *Hausfrau* as she was, from making her household rounds of a morning even to the very kitchen.

But if the King's illness was not feigned, it is certain that it was often exploited by the Queen, the General Staff and the Gounaris Government. When the King was at his worst, and the German trump card in Greece thought to be lost, they said he was much better, fearing a revulsion of public opinion, which in spite of everything was

always in favour of the Entente. When he was really better, the doctors said, on the contrary, that he was much worse, in order to exploit the people's sympathy in his favour, and consequently in favour of the anti-Veniselist party, opposition to the Veniselists being Gounaris' sole idea at that time in view of the approaching elections.

I shall always regret having insisted so strongly with the latter on having the highest medical opinion from abroad to act with our own doctors. I did it not only through real concern for the sick King, but also, I can confess it now, a little with the mental reservation that, considering the interception of communications with Germany, they would be obliged to send for French doctors. Only I reckoned without the Queen, who thought as I did, but in a contrary sense. I never thought that, Bulgaria having established secret relations with Germany for some time past, the Queen would seize the opportunity of procuring German doctors. These two Æsculapiuses, Drs. Krauss and Eiselsberg, were naturally occupied with their patient, who, by the way, was very well tended by our own doctors; but at the same time they looked after the interests of their Emperor, whose emissaries they really were during their two journeys to Athens.

Here is a proof amongst others of this last allegation, gathered by myself. Whilst I was with the army in Macedonia, I took the opportunity of making a pilgrimage to Castoria, to the spot where my brother Paul had fallen in 1904, fighting to liberate Macedonia from the Turks and Bulgarians.

I lodged in that town with a worthy and excellent man, a notable of the district, M. K——, who had a son, a corporal, at the period when the emissaries between Berlin and Athens passed through the neutral zone, in order to reach Epirus, occupied by the Italians—which gave my friend Bosdari the opportunity of granting passes—and from thence to pass at their leisure through occupied Albania and Serbia to Austria. The young corporal told me of the German doctors' journey, and when I said to him that they had served as messengers between the ex-King and ex-Kaiser, he was much troubled and excited, being unable to forgive himself, he said, for having involuntarily helped in the work of betraying Greece to Germany and Bulgaria. The day that the German doctors passed through the neutral zone he had carried, at his officer's command, for a considerable distance a very heavy valise, containing objects of value, or (possibly) the mail from the Court of Athens to Berlin, which Dr. Krauss had confided to him on the word of an officer of gendarmerie.

I come back to the matter of the bulletin on the King's health, compiled as occasion demanded, and specially edited, after arrangement with Gounaris and Dousmanis, by the King's own doctor, Major Anastassopoulos, who was married to a German ; needless to say that he was in the Queen's good graces.

One day, when the King was at his worst, I told the bad news to one of the Entente Ministers, who

had come to the Palace as usual to inquire personally how the King was. Gounaris, having heard of it, rushed off to complain ; his election business must have been in a bad way that day. The Queen, troubled in her turn on learning that the truth had become known, was furious. There was a veritable commotion at the Palace, and Dr. Anastassopoulos held a regular inquiry during the morning in order to discover how what had happened in the King's bedroom could have become known. As will be understood, I kept profoundly silent as to the guilty party in this terrible indiscretion. It was the pretty Princess Helena who had given me the details regarding the patient's bad night. Besides, I always applied to Her Highness for accurate information, seeing that she and Prince Paul, alone of all the Royalties, had access to their father's room.

Now for the first time, after a long interval, I have betrayed Her Highness. If ever these pages have the honour of being read by the Queen, I dare to express a hope that Her Majesty will not scold the poor Princess too much on learning that she was the culprit in having told the truth and turned the Palace upside down that day.

This slight incident, however, might have had very different consequences. In order to make sure that in future the truth should not leak out, the Queen, in her anger, gave us to understand that she forbade us to continue receiving the few intimates of the Court, who sometimes met together in the evening to hear the news. Several of these,



A SERGEANT OF THE ROYAL GUARD.

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up till then all devoted to the King, did not set foot in the Palace again, and showed no further interest, mortified as they were by this order of the Queen. Furthermore, the aide-de-camp on duty, always by command of Her Majesty, ordered the crowd which besieged the Palace every day and even far into the night, so as to have the latest news of the Sovereign's illness, to withdraw as far as the Avenue Herodus Atticus. On arriving at the Palace the next morning, I heard, in passing through the crowd, much murmuring and exasperated comments, expressed loudly by the people, who were annoyed to a dangerous degree.

As a devoted servant, I went straight to speak about it to the Crown Prince, in order to draw his attention to the grievous consequences such measures might have for the monarchy. His Royal Highness, although without a shadow of sympathy with me, worked upon as he was by my dear colleagues and their wives and daughters, did my remarks the justice to approve the counter order, which I had taken upon myself to give the Palace guard at the risk of mortally offending the Marshal and the aide-de-camp on duty, who had not arrived at the Palace at that hour.

If, like all these gentlemen, I had been but a simple courtier, a docile instrument always bowing blindly to the Royal will, I had only to let the Queen's order be carried out without mixing myself up in what in no way concerned my own duties, but it would have impaired the King's popularity, which I considered it my duty to defend as long as I was with him. Such services usually remain

unknown or, at any rate, never appreciated at their proper value. And how can it be otherwise? Statesmen, kings, princes of the blood or of finance—all those, in a word, who are sometimes miscalled “the great”—do they ever know the meaning of gratitude? Besides, how can they, ignorant as they are of the truth, which their base entourage never allows them to hear? To do one’s duty and walk upright, without swerving aside or bending before others or expecting anything from them, is a rare satisfaction, granted to few, but which, when granted, makes life worth living. Better to give up the struggle than to afford those in power the spectacle of a man bowing before them and supplicating their favours.

Independence, frankness, even devotion, are a drawback in a court unless the sovereign, as the word indicates, be really superior to the herd who ordinarily form his court. But that is rarely the case.

It was during the King’s illness that the parliamentary elections took place in May, 1915. I went to the Zappeion to vote. At the moment when I was about to put a black ball into the urn of a Gounarist candidate, his agent, standing, as is customary, behind the urn, and who evidently did not know me, began declaiming the words repeated like a lesson to all the electors: “Know that every vote given to a Veniselist candidate is a ball aimed at the King.” Constantine must really have a fine constitution to have resisted so many missiles. The worthy man had not finished his patter when a look which I darted at him across

the urn closed his mouth and let him very clearly understand for whom I was voting. I had good reason for knowing that he had understood the meaning of this look, for, on moving away, I heard him asking his neighbour at the urn who I was. He must have been very astonished to learn. An hour later my vote was known to the Government and the Court, and my old friend and ex-colleague could not get over my impudence in having openly voted for the Veniselist candidates at the risk of killing the King. At the next election, at which the Veniselist party did not stand, I did not take the trouble to vote at all ; my dear Roidi reproached me afresh with the crime of high treason. I should really not have known what to do if this electoral comedy had continued much longer.

On the 3rd May, 1915, the King was at his worst. One of the doctors, after the consultation, told me that we must be prepared for anything. That same afternoon a charity bazaar was to take place at the Zappeion under the patronage of the Grand Duchess Helena. It was a pretext, as at all courts, for society pleasures, of which people had been deprived for some time owing to the King's condition. As I heard that the fête would prolong itself until late in the evening, and there would be dancing and illuminations, I thought it my duty to inform the Royal Family of the King's state, in order to stop the evening programme at least, more especially as the Zappeion was very near to the Palace. I was received by everyone like a dog in a skittle alley, as a regular spoil-sport ; certain

members of the Royal Family gave me the cold shoulder, others spoke openly against me. They looked as if they would consider it an offence on my part if the King did not die the next day, as I had feared he would. The general indifference of the Royal Family during the King's illness was at times quite shocking.

During this long illness I had at different times suggested to Gounaris and other Ministers that it was absolutely necessary to take steps to institute a regency under the Crown Prince, considering that no one had the right to let the vital interests of the nation, now more than ever at stake, suffer indefinitely. My friend, George Baltazzi, Minister in the Gounaris Cabinet,* answered me in the most idiotic way that he did not see any circumstances "grave enough" at the moment to compel such a measure. All these sincere patriots only thought of the elections, without thinking in any way that elections at such a time were a crime against the nation. I have reason to believe that Gounaris was encouraged in his refusal in the matter of a regency by the Queen, who during the King's illness was the real Regent. The following fact is sufficient for me :

* This is the same G. Baltazzi who, with some fifteen other free-lances of the same calibre, dared to sign an appeal the other day to the people of Greece, calling on them to rise and demand elections to "save the country" from the political misfortunes wherein the "tyranny" of M. Veniselos had plunged it. And that at the moment when M. Veniselos was attending the Conference at San Remo to put the last touches to his work for the realization of our national ideals. At such a moment a noisy outcry demanding respect for the famous Constitution so often trampled on by the Constantine party is deplorably grotesque. To use as an argument that elections having been held in France, in England, and other countries should also be held in Greece, only proves the blind passion and ignorance of those wretched and trumpety politicians.

From the 24th to the 27th June, not one of the confidential telegrams from abroad reached me from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I knew, however, that these dispatches continued to be sent regularly to the Palace by the Minister. From the Palace they were forwarded to the General Staff by the aide-de-camp on duty without being communicated to me. I knew besides, through a complaint of General Dousmanis, how Colonel Scoumbourdis had one day sent them without even taking the trouble to seal them up, and the whole General Staff knew their contents. I waited patiently for three days, and then applied to the King's aide-de-camp. He acknowledged, under the seal of the greatest secrecy, that it was by order of the Queen. If the King had been better, I should have instantly sent in my resignation, but, considering the circumstances, I did not wish to cause any unpleasantness. However, for my own sake, I sought the Queen's Marshal of the Court, Jean Théotoky, and asked him to beg Her Majesty graciously to deign to let me know the reason for this order. Théotoky returned half an hour later, and told me with an embarrassed air, as one who had just received a severe reprimand, that Her Majesty acknowledged that it would, in fact, be better if these confidential papers continued to be delivered to me as in the past. "But," went on Théotoky, "try and come to a reconciliation with Colonel Metaxas, in order that he may continue to come to you every morning to receive the news as before."

I understood then whence the blow came. Some

days before I had an argument with Metaxas on the subject of these telegrams, which, by command of the King, I was to allow him to read at my office every morning before forwarding them to the General Staff. As he was rather late one morning, I had already sent them to Dousmanis. Metaxas was at that time at daggers drawn with Dousmanis, and therefore unable to see them at the General Staff, and communicate their contents afterwards to the German military attaché, as he did regularly, so he left my office in a fury. From that day onwards he never came again. I was not sorry; anyhow, it was one person the less to have sight of these important papers. I took the liberty several times of begging the King to allow me to send Dousmanis only those telegrams which treated of purely military matters; but His Majesty opposed this obstinately, alleging that at Berlin the Emperor communicated everything to the Chief of the General Staff of the Army, in order that the latter might be in touch with all foreign political questions. I was therefore obliged to carry out the King's orders, but I may confess to-day that at times I took upon myself to destroy some of those telegrams, without allowing either Metaxas or Dousmanis to read them, for it seemed to me that, if communicated to Berlin, they might do great harm to the Allies.

Thus Metaxas must have complained to the Queen that, on account of our disagreement, he would be unable in the future to learn the contents of these confidential dispatches, which terribly distressed the poor German military attaché.

I explained to Théotoky that, after the incident with Metaxas I did not wish to write to the latter, fearing that such a step might be taken by him as an advance on my part; but that, if it were a command of the Queen, I would comply, and send him a word asking him to come to my office. Whereupon my friend Théotoky, seeing he had shown his hand, explained in a trembling voice that he was only speaking for himself, and not the Queen, who had nothing to do with it, that she knew nothing of it—in fine, that the Queen never meddled with anything—except with my telegrams. By his fright, I saw how much the Queen, as well as her Marshal, were afraid of being found out and compromised. I pretended not to notice anything, and let him continue developing his interminable theories on his conception of a courtier's duty, which is to accept any affronts rather than cause the least unpleasantness. I never thought thus, and I felt no constraint in telling him so.

Towards the beginning of May, the King was very ill. M. Veniselos, who was staying at Mitylene, begged one of his former cabinet ministers, M. Roufos—who has since basely “ratted”—to go to the Palace to learn how the King was and to cable to him directly. I made a point of bringing M. Roufos and the King's own doctor together, and hastened to make known to the Press the interest manifested by M. Veniselos.

The next morning I was at the Palace speaking with the Crown Prince and his uncle Prince André, the King's brother, when Stratos, Minister of Marine,

arrived. Prince André having spoken to him of the visit of M. Roufos, on which all the papers had commented that day, M. Stratos, furious at this mark of interest on the part of the voluntary exile, was about to answer with his usual violence when, turning to me, he stopped short and looked so foolish, and the Princes also looked at me with so silly and so significant an air that I moved quietly away in order to give them full liberty to exchange their kind remarks about M. Veniselos.

During those days prayers were said in all the churches of the kingdom for the restoration of the King's health. The Gounaris Press had declaimed volubly against M. Veniselos' indifference, who, being at Mitylene, had not attended the official service at the church. These gentlemen of the Court were very annoyed when M. Veniselos' envoy said that the President believed it best not to go to the official service in order to avoid any unseasonable demonstrations in his favour at such a time, but had not failed to have prayers said for the King in a modest way at a small village in the neighbourhood.

It was always the same refrain. If Veniselos dared to show any interest, it was obviously interest of a political kind ; if Veniselos neglected to show any interest, it was criminal indifference towards the King. Eternal injustice !

The whole pack was still more annoyed when, on the 28th May, M. Veniselos, just back from Mitylene, came to the Palace to ask news of the King, to the great chagrin of all my colleagues. On that day the Gounaris Government, long tottering

to its fall, had taken no measures nor employed any armed forces to prevent the "traitor" from approaching the Palace.

I can say further on this same subject that on the 21st May, 1915, on St. Constantine's day, amongst the thousands of congratulatory telegrams to the King, to which, as was customary, I replied by command, signing them with my own name on account of the King's illness, there was one from M. Veniselos. I thought it as well to inform the Queen, and wrote Her Majesty a word to say that I had taken it upon myself to send an expression of thanks in reply. To my great surprise, the Queen let me know that it was the King's wish that I should put his name to that particular telegram. I hastened to stop my telegram, which I had already dispatched, that I might conform to the King's wishes. This spark of good feeling from Royalty was soon extinguished by Streit.

I may put it on record that the unfortunate Czar Nicolas II. telegraphed his good wishes to his cousin of Greece on St. Constantine's Day, 1915, writing that it was "not only as his relative, but as his future ally" that he sent congratulations. I do not know what the Queen replied to this untimely dispatch, for during the King's illness I remitted to her for answer all telegrams from crowned heads referring to the King's state of health.

Here is another small and unimportant fact which will, however, serve to give a notion of the "neutrality" of the Court circle. I was talking

one day with the Prince Royal in the courtyard of the Palace, when Madame R., wife of my colleague, came up without ceremony and said to His Highness, with the utmost impertinence and showing great anger: "What, sir! you talk to Veniselists!" The Prince, not having the wit to say anything, but merely smiling in reply, I replied for him and gave the lady all she merited.

Faith is a beautiful virtue! Besides the famous miraculous Virgin of Tinos, of which I shall speak later, ikons of all sorts simply rained upon us. There was a room full of them at the Palace. Every time that I passed one on to Mademoiselle Condostavlou, the Queen's lady-in-waiting, she would take it devoutly in both hands, making the sign of the cross as though I were a bishop, and even while she muttered words of praise she would mix with them curses on poor Sir Francis Elliot, who, according to her, wished to dethrone the King. She had very seriously told me her apprehensions on the subject.

Talking about holy images, I will relate an incident which may appear perhaps surprising, but to which I was not the sole witness. I have no wish to pose as a free-thinker, but I believe little in prophecies and still less in the efficacy of sacred symbols; but, on the other hand, I believe in presentiments.

About a month before the King's illness, Madame K. G., a doctor's wife, a lady of most attractive appearance, pretty and big-eyed, mystical of gaze, came to the Palace and asked for the aide-de-camp

of the day—it was Colonel Levidis—and told him that Saint Somebody (I forget which saint) had appeared to her in a dream and had foretold that the King would have a grave illness, of which he would die. She suggested novenas and similar means of conjuring the evil predicted. The aide-de-camp received the prediction for what it was worth. Some days later she returned to the Palace and complained that the Saint had reproached her with the fact that nothing had been done, and no notice taken of what he had said. As the King was in robust health, Levidis, in spite of those appalling prophecies, began to chaff the poor lady. I was there at the moment, and was struck by the look of real distress that I could see in the woman's eyes; she had turned dreadfully pale, and lifted her gaze to heaven like a believer who had heard a blasphemy. I took her for a lunatic, but I was sorry for her, and, drawing near, I begged her to be seated and to tell me what she had to say. She said the Saint had kept on appearing for the last three days, giving her no rest, insisting that she should make known to the King that if he did not go himself to a certain monastery in Thessaly and fetch away a certain little holy image he would die of a sickness which he was going to have very shortly. I kept my countenance while the pretty visionary talked to me, then I conducted her to the door, and turned back to join in my friend's laughter, who chaffed me on my devotion. Needless to say I took no steps to procure the image.

Two or three days later, when the King had been taken ill, Madame K. G. came back to see me, and

said in tones of sad reproach : “ You did not believe me either. You have done nothing of what I told you to do for the King, and the Saint continues to reproach me.”

I replied that the King was in bed and could not move at present. “ Send for the image all the same,” she insisted ; “ that won’t cost anything. They will give it up immediately if you ask for it for the King, and you will not repent. Do it, I beg of you,” said she, joining her hands, “ and above all things, put it in the sick room, otherwise he will die and your conscience will never cease to reproach you.”

I pretended to believe her, and took a note of the monastery and name of the church, etc. In the evening, at the club, I met my friend C. Topalis, deputy for the very province where Madame G. had situated her monastery. Her information about the monastery, which she only knew from the Saint, for she had never been there, was all correct, according to Topalis. I asked him to help me to get hold of this image if it really existed, and put a courier at his service to go and seek for it. Some days later I received the priceless talisman, which I hastened to convey the same evening to Her Highness Princess Helena, who went and placed it in her father’s room.

I thought I had done with my visionary, but I had another visit from her the day that the King was at the point of death ; the doctors had almost given up hope. Madame K. G. told me to fear nothing, for the King would assuredly survive, but it would be to trail the Greek flag in blood and mire

unless certain prayers were said in every church in the kingdom. I thanked her, but my devotion to the King carried me no further, for, as I have said, we were expecting the end any moment, in spite of the image which I had caused to be fetched.

In the autumn of the same year, when the King was completely cured, Madame K. G. came to see me once more. She spoke again as she had before, on the matter of our flag, saying that the "Saint" said the King was driving Greece into the abyss; that he would be killed in a revolution, or dethroned. I confess that she had by now made an impression on me, not without cause. I asked her to wait in my bureau, and went and requested the King to receive her, telling him only the first part of her prophecy, about his illness, but not about the flag; but on conducting this strange lady to the King, I urged her to repeat, without fear, all that she had said to me. She made answer, simply, that doubtless she would do so, for she was only the mouthpiece of the "Saint." It is a fact that, after she had left, the King called for me and said that, if ever she came again, he would see her, which shows that he also had been impressed.

Madame K. G. came back no more. But need I say that all those predictions were verified to the letter? The Greek flag was indeed for a time trailed in blood and mire by King Constantine, but, thanks to M. Veniselos and our brave soldiers, it floats again more glorious than ever, washed long since in the cleansing blood of thousands of brave men.

The nullity of Gounaris and his narrowness of mind never showed more plainly than during the King's illness. When the King was at his worst, and when our national interests were most seriously compromised, Gounaris and his worthy colleagues thought of nothing but the elections, and only busied themselves with obtaining the dying King's signature to warrants for changes in subordinate offices in view of the coming election. I shall never forget the impression made on me one day by the Prime Minister and one of his colleagues, Tsaldaris, when they came to the Palace to get the decrees they were so impatient for. Their joy was so absurd and so entirely occupied them that they forgot to ask news of the sick man in handing the precious warrants. They went off, rubbing their hands, like a couple of partners in crime, who were going to divide the spoil.

But my most vivid recollection of Gounaris is the ridiculous impression he made on the occasion of the mediæval progress of the so-called miraculous ikon, the Virgin of Tinos. This image was transported from the island of Tinos to Athens with great pomp and in a man-of-war, at the instigation of Gounaris and all the pious old cronies of Greece, and in the face of all the Greek and German medicos. It went back to its island with even greater honours when the King became convalescent.

I can still see the Prime Minister, a modern Don Quixote, in a frock coat and with a tall hat worn well on the back of his head, accompanied by his

faithful Sancho in the person of my friend George Baltazzi, running several times to the Palace in the course of the morning to tell us the exact spot, to a yard, reached by the sacred image on the road from Phaleron as it rolled majestically along in its automobile through crowds of devotees. He brought these reports with a seriousness so comic that he was like a general in a comic opera. He was kept informed as he was by cavalry pickets posted all along the strategic way! Really, it was so deplorably grotesque, such a performance on the part of a Prime Minister, that one was led to regret that Leo III., the Emperor of Byzantium, the Iconoclast, had not in the VIIth century pushed his quarrel with images a little further.

My antipathy for this statesman, a creature of Constantine, was no doubt reciprocated after I had saved M. Veniselos from assassination. This is how it came about :

In the month of May, 1915, a person came to see me at the Palace and discovered to me the details of a plot against the President's life, with a list of the conspirators and of their meeting places. Its idea was to sink, as though by accident, the ship conveying M. Veniselos from Mitylene, and in the resulting confusion to kill him. A wretched, degenerate naval officer, since struck off the list, was to execute this brilliant conception.

And this was when M. Veniselos, imitating one of his great forerunners, had determined, with an admirable and patriotic self-denial, to quit Athens, in the hope that his unworthy successors would

then decide to follow the course he had laid down, when, thanks to his departure, they need no longer fear being accused of following the policy of another.

I at once gave the list to my friend Alexis Grivas, a Veniselist deputy—at the present moment Minister of War—that he might inform the President ; being unwilling to speak myself on account of my position at Court. Among the conspirators were some of the Palace police.

I sent for the head of this secret police force, and, without telling him, naturally, all the details I knew, I made him see the consequences that would result to His Majesty if it came out that a police force maintained for the security of the King's person against Bulgarian attempts on his life should itself be mixed up in such a crime. He took himself off trembling, and promising to make the strictest inquiry ; but, instead of that, he of course went straight to his official chief, Gounaris, and told him the thing was discovered. It was just what I wanted, and to let the Government know, without noise or fuss, that I was aware of what was going on, in the hope that this would be enough to stop such criminal intentions.

Gounaris, instead of keeping quiet and smothering his anger, came post haste to the Palace. He was furious with me and conferred with the Marshal of the Court as to how he could have me ejected from a position which enabled me to know more than was convenient to the Government. Mercati, I am willing to believe, knew nothing of the plot, but nothing would have pleased him better than to further the Prime Minister's wishes, because he

had a constant and groundless fear that I might take his place as Marshal because of the favour shown me by the King. The King was still very ill at the time and there was nothing to be done, but Mercati, the kind friend, advised Gounaris to furnish him with a written complaint against me, under some pretext or other, in order that, when the King was restored to health, he might have something to go on if he spoke to the King about me. It was easily done, and Gounaris did it, and had the stupidity to own it to me in the end. This allegation was that all my activities were "contrary to the interests of the Government."

What Gounaris called "contrary to the interests of the Government" was my having stopped it from being implicated in an assassination! What greater ingratitude could there be? And I had expected thanks! According to what I have lately read in the Athens papers, this ill-omened individual, after one abortive attempt, took a hand again in the horrible plot of last November, 1919;* and now that he is a refugee in Italy from the justice of his country, he is doing his best to raise sedition in Greece.

Mercati was much surprised when I said to him that, if His Majesty on his recovery found any fault with me in this affair, I should immediately tender my resignation. "How should he know anything?" he asked, astonished that I was aware of his treachery. "Through me," I answered coldly, without telling him that I knew every detail

* Since then a further unsuccessful attempt was made whilst M. Venizelos was at the San Remo conference, and again in Paris last August.

of his conversation with Gounaris from the Prime Minister himself. It was one of the very first things I told the King, and he held me justified throughout.*

Another matter may come into this chapter of the King's illness. The Queen refused to allow H.H. Prince George to see the King, his brother, though he had come expressly from Paris in June, 1915. The King had been literally sequestered by the Queen during his illness, and only allowed to see such persons as were favourable to Germany. She was afraid then that her brother-in-law would influence the King on behalf of the Entente. For several days the Prince was forbidden the King's room, although many people were seeing him. Then it was that, walking in the garden, His Highness for the first time let me speak to him of M. Veniselos without any show of anger, and without employing his usual strong language against him.

"Admit, sir," I said, "that Veniselos is a remarkable man." Avoiding a direct reply, the Prince said :

"Well, here is where I differ from the King. I look on Veniselos as my worst enemy, and yet, as you know, I do my utmost to induce the King to follow his policy in favour of the Entente. Constantine looks on Veniselos as a great man, and yet will not follow his advice ; who is right, Constantine or I ?"

How unfortunate and unjustifiable was this hatred of Veniselos, as implacable on the Prince's part

* A thing he would not have done a few months later.

as on the King's.* It was all the more regrettable because Prince George alone, of all the Royal Family, showed proof of patriotism during the war and was a Greek Prince. It is only needful to point to his urgent telegrams to his brother to push him in the direction of the Entente. He is the only member of the Royal Family who thought of Greece as his native land. There is the proof that he continues to give a Greek education to his charming children, brought up, nevertheless, so far from Greece. The Prince had left Athens on account of his hatred for M. Veniselos long before Constantine's dethronement, and only came back for the wars of 1912 and 1913.

When I was in Paris as Assistant Military Attaché during the Peace Conference, I was walking one day at St. Cloud in the Rue du Mont Valérien, and saw our colours floating above a garden entrance, together with those of France and England. Much interested, I asked who lived there. I was told that it was Prince George, absent from France at the moment, but that Princess Marie and the little princes were there. Not knowing what reception I might have from the Princess, for the dethronement of Constantine had drawn together the members and relations of the Royal Family in a common monarchical and family interest, I only asked for the young princes. Princess Marie, wondering that I had not sent in my name, accompanied the children herself,

* If the rumour, current in Paris, of intrigues on the part of H.H. Prince George in favour of the restoration of ex-King Constantine—his brother—be true, they unfortunately only prove that the feeling which predominates in the heart of Prince George is entirely that of hatred for M. Veniselos, to the exclusion of more patriotic motives.

and was much astonished to see me, but received me as kindly as ever, though lightly touching, in his defence, on the dethronement of the King. To my question whether Prince Pierre still knew a few words of Greek both he and the delightful little Eugenie quickly and almost indignantly, as though I should have known it without asking, replied in perfect Greek: "But of course! we have our regular lessons with Mademoiselle Lucie." And yet these children have scarcely lived in Greece, and I believe that Princess Eugenie has not been there since she was old enough to speak.

I cannot end this chapter without drawing attention, apropos of the elections of May, 1915, to the phenomenon, perhaps unique in parliamentary annals, of a whole people voting for a man whose programme was war; and that, following two recent wars and during the menace of the German success in France and Belgium, and, above all, after the failure of the attack on the Dardanelles, so disastrous to the Allies and their prestige. This fine action on the part of little Greece has not been fully appreciated abroad. In some circles there has been displayed a contempt for her, as unjust as it is undeserved, and at times, moreover, so gross in the expression of it that I, who was born in France, and look on France as my second native country, have at times suffered from this enmity in my dealings with some of my French comrades.

VI

THE ETAT-MAJOR

I HAVE already said that, at the outbreak of the war, the great majority, if not all the officers of the General Staff, even those who had had their training in Germany, were favourably disposed to the Entente. They would have made every effort in its cause had the King desired it, and had the Entente known how to assure itself of their useful co-operation.

Instead of that, on account of various mistakes here and there, and wretched personal considerations, I may add, from servility rather than devotion to the King, the whole Staff, without exception, became, in the end, fanatically devoted to Germany. They wanted to punish the Entente.

I wish it to be recognized that I would no more defend these gentlemen than I would defend the King. Nothing can absolve them from the guilt of having changed their opinions in twenty-four hours in order to "punish" the Entente at the price of bringing the greatest misfortune on our country. Some officers forfeited all right to the name of Greeks and invited the dreadful epithet that every patriot may with justice apply to them. The pretext of the Allies' "blunders" was an unworthy excuse. It is childish to punish others

by inflicting double injury on oneself. These officers have no excuse. Like their master, they worked in concert with the Turk and the Bulgarian ; it is a stain and a crime that they can never wash away.

To speak of the Staff during the phase with which we are occupied is to speak of General Dousmanis. I knew him very little, and that only by sight. His knowledge of me was no greater. He was not a man of the social world, nor was our first meeting of a nature to ingratiate me with him.

It was in 1913, during the siege of Jannina. The King, then Prince Royal, and Commander-in-Chief, had just arrived on the Macedonian front from Salonica, to continue in Epirus the operations begun by General Sapountzakis, to whom I was acting as orderly officer. Constantine, that morning, had come with the General Staff to the heights above Canetta to study the ground and the look-out. He asked for a map, of which I went in search. I was going up to His Highness to give it to him, when Dousmanis, then a major, met me, and very brusquely—he said afterwards that he had not recognized me—asked me for the paper which I had in my hand. On my answering that the Prince had sent me for the map, and that my General had given me orders to hand it to him myself, Dousmanis said curtly : “ There is no Crown Prince here. I am the Crown Prince.” And he snatched the map from my hands. I, as those who know me may believe, drew myself up indignantly in spite of his position as Chief of Staff. He noticed this, and some one

having whispered to him who I was, he came up to me shortly after and began telling me about my brother Basil, a cavalry officer, whom he had recently met, he said, on the Macedonian front; and he did what he could to make himself pleasant. But the impression was made, and has not changed. His opening words were eloquent of the man.

Dousmanis was a born conspirator. His ambition knew no limits. To gain his ends he would have walked over men's bodies. They tell me that when he was still a cadet at the Military School, Colonel Colocotronis, the governor, said of him to Colonel Manos: "That young fellow will spill blood in Greece one day." The prediction was realized in 1916 by the creation of the *Epistrates*, a conception the honour of which is due exclusively to the General Staff, with the collaboration of the Government, the German Military Attaché, and some other hot-heads. And what can one think of a man who never looks one in the face when he speaks? His treacherous gaze avoids that of others. I once said quite seriously to the King that Dousmanis, after helping to destroy M. Veniselos, would bring about his downfall also one day. The King thought I was joking, and laughed, but he did not defend his Chief of Staff. The chance did not come his way, but his perfidious counsel did much towards the King's dethronement.

Moreover, General Dousmanis had not a grain of moral courage in the least. I shall not forget how pale and tremulous he was when he came to the Palace the day after M. Veniselos, as War Minister, had superseded him in punishment for the

publication of a letter containing injurious remarks on the Prime Minister in his double capacity. Dousmanis asked me, trembling, what the King's feelings were towards him. I was so sorry for him that I soothed him by telling him that the King had warmly pleaded his cause in an autograph letter (of which I have a copy) to the Prime Minister, in which he had asked for a reduction of the penalty. But M. Veniselos was inexorable, and even threatened to resign himself if the decree ordering Dousmanis' retirement were not signed by a stated time. But what I did not tell Dousmanis was that when, in order that the King's last hesitations might be removed, and that he might have the pleasure of seeing his favourite restored, M. Veniselos subsequently recalled him to the Army and put him at the head of the General Staff, on the condition that he should maintain at the second Crown Council of 1915 what he had affirmed the previous evening to M. Veniselos; namely, that a division of the Greek Army could be detached for operations in the Dardanelles without prejudice to our Army. What I never told Dousmanis, nor M. Veniselos, was that the King, far from being pleased, was furious, and, above all, that the General should make such a statement. He had come to take pleasure in working with the hypocritical and underhand successor of Dousmanis, Colonel Metaxas, Second-in-Command on the Staff, who, moreover, made himself indispensable to the Queen in the matter of transmitting information to Germany. Yes, Dousmanis was a born conspirator; he simply had to have enemies, against whom he could

carry on underhand intrigues. An enemy for him meant anyone who, for one reason or another, either material or moral, he felt was superior to himself or in the enjoyment of the King's favour. Had he not had enemies, he would have created them for the pleasure of circumventing them.

Colonel Jean Metaxas, Second-in-Command, was indubitably a sound man from a military point of view, but he was a man full of gall. This rancour dominated him. And so he had become an irreconcilable enemy of England, because the British Government—unfortunately for itself, I must say—had not accepted his plan of attack for the Dardanelles, the success of which would have opened the way to Constantinople.

Since Metaxas had become the Queen's right-hand man, as Streit was the intimate adviser of the King, both keeping Berlin informed and receiving their orders from the Kaiser, Metaxas had given himself the airs of a pocket Moltke. There is no doubt that Metaxas and Dousmanis and other members of our Staff were first-class men; one must admit that in spite of their crimes, though it renders their crimes the greater.

To justify themselves, they had recourse to all sorts of absurd theories, "for since," they said, "we are neutrals, we must let the Germans and their friends on to our territory just as we had done in the case of the Allies themselves; it is only just!" In so saying, these madmen forgot that the friends of Germany were our natural enemies. They pretended to forget that the Anglo-French occupation

had brought with it, particularly in Macedonia, civilization and the hope of better things ; whereas the Germans, Bulgarians and the Turks had spread terror and devastation throughout the country. The very comparison proves their wickedness.

This detestable interpretation of neutrality was officially laid down by one of the Prime Ministers of the ex-King's faction. I have spoken of Spiro Lambros. He is dead. I will merely say of him that he was an eminent professor of history in Athens University, and was one fine day made Prime Minister by the ex-King ! The mere recital of the fact is enough, and covers him with ridicule. He addressed to Admiral Dartige du Fournet, under date of the 21st June, 1916, an official letter inspired by the Staff, or, rather, dictated by them, for they alone were in a position to know these technical details. In this letter, written in reply to a request for munitions of war, which had been claimed by the Admiral in the name of the Allies, he drew up a comparative table of the supplies given voluntarily by Greece to the Entente, and of those not ceded but taken by the Bulgarians ! Lambros thus officially recognized a similarity of obligation on the part of Greece towards the Germans and Bulgarians on the one hand, and the French and British on the other ! Neither he nor the General Staff felt the biting irony of Admiral Fournet's complaint that he had been given less than the Bulgarians had stolen !

A certain writer of low standing has published in Switzerland a pamphlet against M. Veniselos,

accusing him of having "for long past prepared to put Greece under the yoke of the Allies." What name would he give to the condition of Greece, if the Germans, having gained the victory by the aid of the Turks and Bulgarians, had forced our country into the famous Confederation dreamed of by Constantine? Would he be satisfied to see the King, the Staff, and the Government obeying the slightest word of command transmitted from Berlin by Theotoky? If that were not servitude, by what name could it be called?

Apropos of this, Sir Thomas Cunningham told me that Metaxas said to him one day, thinking to say something pleasant and intelligent, that he had no personal animosity against the Entente, but that, as a Greek, he could not wish Greece to become their slave. The view was similar to that of the Greek nonentity quoted above, who, moreover, dared to speak of the Greek Army of Macedonia as "a handful of mercenaries" because our regiments, fighting side by side with the Allies, were placed under the command of French and British commanders-in-chief.

I will say more. At that time the Press of the Constantine faction was so incredibly wrong-headed as to declare themselves satisfied with what the King of Bulgaria had said "in regard to respecting the integrity of Greek territory!" The patriotism of Colonel Metaxas was revolted by the notion of seeing the Greek Army fight against the Bulgarians by the side of the Allies, but felt no humiliation in seeing Greece under the ægis of those same Bulgarians! What perversity of mind! To what

lengths will not fanaticism go when it is nourished by hatred !

In their recent trial, the officers of the General Staff have tried to exculpate themselves from blame for their infamous creation of the Epistratian hordes. Nevertheless, the dishonour attaching to it is indisputably theirs, and it demands no little impudence to deny it to-day, as does Colonel Stratigos, born a lawyer rather than a soldier.

In the same manner the act of treachery which took place at Athens in December, 1916, must be entirely imputed to them, seeing that they could have stopped it, unless they confess that the creation of the Epistrates had succeeded to such an extent, beyond their hopes, that the Epistrates had, in turn, become masters of the situation.

Indeed, the relationship between these two Royal services was so close, that the terms of " Epistrate " and " General Staff " were interchangeable.

Madame Doulgueroff, an indefatigable nurse in all our wars, told us one day at Salonica that, on the very morning of the fatal day on the way to her hospital, she met an officer of the Staff whose name I have forgotten, who said to her laughingly : " Send us a few nurses to Headquarters, we may want them before the day is out."

This alone might prove premeditation, apart from the well-known fact that since the previous evening the ex-Crown Prince had been going the round of the barracks, exhorting the soldiers to give no quarter to French, English or Veniselists on the morrow. On this point there is overwhelming evidence.

Moreover, on the following day, the then Minister of War, by the King's orders, congratulated the Epistrates and their gang on having "saved the country." And Colonel Courevelis worked harder than ever to imbue his men in his own peculiar fashion with a fanaticism favourable to the ex-King, the conqueror of the Entente and of Veniselos, its faithful ally.

A few days later Queen Sophia telegraphed to her brother William :

" . . . The Army and the people are fighting magnificently and stand their ground faithfully. The corner is turned. A great victory has been won against four great Powers. Let us know when the Army of Macedonia will be sufficiently reinforced to undertake a definite offensive. . . . "*

As we may see, the dogma of German invincibility had taken root in Athens, and the Queen, especially, was a little previous in considering that it was all over with the Allies !

The General Staff was thus all-powerful at the time. The King merely signed what was put before him. The Minister for War existed only in name. The Headquarters Staff knew better than anyone that, when Bulgaria mobilized, she would have but a very limited supply of munitions—scarcely, I believe, four hundred shells to a gun ; and Turkey had still less.

The Staff and the King knew perfectly well that

* Radio station ATA to station XM. December 6th, 1916.

the Government, even in Gounaris' time, had simply to notify Bulgaria, as I had so often begged the King, of its firm decision to respect the Treaty of Bucharest, and Bulgaria would not even have dared to mobilize. We know what Gounaris did instead. He informed the Bulgarians that Greece would not go to war.

The King ratified this declaration himself on the eve of the very day that Gounaris gave place to M. Veniselos. A half-sheet of paper, a few words, would have sufficed to save Serbia from her miserable fate. But out of deference to the Kaiser, the ex-King would not let them be said.

Is it necessary to remind these gentlemen on the General Staff of the order which removed the breech pieces of our guns which were guarding the Bulgarian frontier? When I put the question at Salonica to a senior artillery officer, M. R——, who was a friend of mine, he said, with tears in his eyes, "that professional secrecy forbade him to say anything." It was a sufficient avowal, I think.

Must I mention the orders given to the 5th Army Corps, orders which were kept from me at the time.—I had been sent as orderly officer with General Sotilis when I left the Court.—These orders, religiously observed by Sotilis since they came from the King, were "to take all necessary measures to assure free passage to the Bulgarian army by the Serrés Road!" Orders derided by General Sarrail, who thereupon blew up the bridge at Demir Hissar, to the great indignation of Constantine's officers.

Are we to speak of the Rupel betrayal, a count in the indictment on which Dousmanis and his myrmidons dared to defend themselves in the recent trial; namely, the betrayal of nearly all Eastern Macedonia to the Bulgarians, as well as of our forts and our war material; a betrayal which brought certain Ministers in the Skouloudis cabinet the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Saviour?—cruel irony!

It was one of these gentlemen who dared to say that he would a hundred times rather see Bulgarians in Athens than see Veniselos there. Meanwhile, Skouloudis was seriously assuring M. Guillemin, the French Minister, who reproached him with the Rupel betrayal, that he did not mean to allow the Bulgarians to come as far as Athens! That was all his ambition! These words are enough to show the type of mind which was at the head of the Greek Government in its tragic hour.

I have said that the gentlemen of the General Staff, and also the members of the Skouloudis cabinet, dared to repudiate the accusation that they betrayed Fort Rupel. Instead of written proof being required of them, why were they not asked this simple question: "Have soldiers ever been known, in time of war, to approach an enemy fort marching as on parade, and that across a difficult pass such as Kresna, unless there was connivance?"

In connection with the Fort Rupel affair, the opprobrium that must attach to the ex-King will be aggravated by the words he addressed to one of the Ministers of the Entente Powers about the

spontaneous demonstrations at Salonica protesting against the betrayal. He had the audacity to say that the demonstrations were "organized" by Macedonian refugees, who were paid at twenty francs a head! The ex-King of the Greeks, judging others by himself, refused his people even the possession of a sense of patriotism. He would not believe that the millions of Baron Schenk had not succeeded in killing all feelings of patriotism in the Greek people. Such words, spoken by the King to a Minister of the Entente, are enough to brand him for ever.

In the course of the trial none of these gentlemen omitted to express his devotion to the Entente. That they became friends of the Entente when the Entente was victorious presents no difficulty; but what is more difficult to believe is that they were not fervently Germanophile during the war.

With the reader's permission I will relate a personal incident which will go to prove that the Staff and the Minister of War were scarcely friends of the Entente at the period of which I am going to speak.

After I had left the King's personal service and rejoined the army, and about ten days before I had received notification from my regiment, Lady Cunningham, the wife of the English Military Attaché—and this small fact will lend support to what I have said about Sir Thomas Cunningham's excellent relations with the Staff—said to me that she had heard from a relative of General Dousmanis that I was to leave Athens soon and join the 5th

Army Corps in Macedonia. They did me the honour of regarding my presence in Athens with apprehension. In a word, I was expelled the place.

I was on the Strouma with the 5th Corps, and was riding one day on the road to Serrés; near Orliako I remarked a bivouac of British cavalry. I went up to them, and was very kindly received by the O.C., Major Ramsay, and his officers. He told me that he intended making a reconnaissance next day in the direction of Rupel—it was some months before the betrayal—and I offered to go with him as guide, for I knew the district well since our recent war with Bulgaria, and I promised to return the same evening with my orderly and my horses, for we were to start at dawn. I rejoined my corps to inform General, then Colonel, Nider, Chief of the Staff, that I wanted some days' leave of absence with the English. The Colonel, who was timid of manner, grew red, scratched his head, and said in an embarrassed tone: "My dear Mélas, don't go there," and evidently wanted to say no more. But I pressed him, and begged him to tell General Sotilis that I was only asking for a few days' leave in the sector itself. He had to give way, but soon came back, still more embarrassed, to say that the General in command of the Corps not merely forbade my visit to the British, but forbade me to hold any communication with the British or the French. Thereupon I asked Colonel Nider whether we were at war with the Allies, and since when. He then told me, and it was the first I heard of it, that I was a State prisoner,* and forbidden to go beyond a

* War Office S.O. No. 46971, year 1916.

certain distance from headquarters, and expressly forbidden to communicate with the Allies. Out of deference to my age and former position, he had been unwilling to tell me so on my arrival, and General Sotilis had frequently had the courtesy to invite me to his table and to give me, up till then, full liberty to ride where I liked. If ever Major Ramsay reads this book, he will know why I failed to keep my appointment, without writing a word of excuse, or letting him know. From that day onward, out of pride, I hardly ever left my hut, not caring to use the measure of liberty the War Minister deigned to allow me.

Some days before this adventure, I had asked General Sotilis permission to go to Salonica to consult a specialist. General Sarrail and Lord Granard, attached to the British Staff, kindly asked me to dinner. Two spies of the Constantine party, whom I will not condescend to name, having denounced my "criminal" relations with the Allies, the Minister of War, General Gianakitsas,* sent telegram after telegram to the Commandant at Salonica telling him to order me back to my Corps at once, and to let the Ministry know the hour I left Salonica. Thenceforth that town was forbidden me.

Some days later, again having occasion to consult a specialist, I had with great reluctance again to ask permission. There was a long exchange of telegrams on this important matter between the Corps and the War Ministry before I could go, not to Salonica, but to Cavalla, where there were no Allies.

* Appointed honorary president of the Epistrates.

As I write these lines, the council of war has pronounced its decision and only condemned two out of four of the principal culprits on the former Army General Staff, one of these in his absence, for he had fled to Italy from his country's justice. The rest, though equally guilty, were acquitted. It does not come within the scope of this book to speak of them. But there was one of them, nevertheless, who got off for lack of proof. The proof was carefully destroyed by the auto-da-fé instituted by the General Staff when they felt the ground giving way beneath them, and when Lieut.-Colonel E—— was persuaded that the Germans had no chance of reaching Athens and appreciating his good offices. But an overwhelming proof against this officer might have been found in Berlin at the German Headquarters Staff, whither the ex-King's representative had remitted it. It is a long telegram framed by Colonel E—— as responsible head of the political section of the Staff, giving precise instructions to the Bulgarians as to the best point to fall on the Anglo-French forces on their retreat from Krivolak. This gentleman, like the rest, protested his innocence, and his devotion to the Entente.

The minute of this telegram was countersigned by the Prime Minister, then M. Alexander Zaïmis. I am sure that had this detail been known to M. Jonnart, he would not have given M. Zaïmis his certificate of good conduct; and some of those officers were acquitted, others not tried, and two only were condemned, but the guilt of many of them is indisputably established.

VII

THE DARDANELLES

THE "GOEBEN" AND "BRESLAU"

I NEED not revert to the tergiversations of the Entente with the different Constantinian cabinets. Ignorance and hesitation on the one side and ill will and bad faith on the other, such was the order of the day. But since, in speaking of the King's interview with General Pau, I mentioned His Majesty's dictum about the way to set about forcing the Dardanelles, I cannot help pointing out once more that, if the British Admiralty could have rid itself of its mistrust, it might have taken into consideration the report submitted by our Staff, and the 41,200 killed, out of 120,000 casualties, might have been spared a death which, however glorious, effected little.

The decisive stroke which threw Turkey definitely into the arms of the Germanic block was undoubtedly the gift, disguised as a sale, of the German men-of-war, *Goeben* and *Breslau*.

All sailors, and all who know the value of the British navy, will acknowledge that if the British had wanted they could have prevented these two ships from entering the Dardanelles. The British squadron was looking for them on the side of Pola,

in the Adriatic, while our squadron, under Admiral Coundouriotis, signalled that they were at Syra, and asked, in spite of the crushing superiority of the *Goeben* over our best units and in spite of our neutrality, authority to follow them into the Straits.

Moreover, on the 4th August, 1914, the Kaiser, through our Minister at Berlin, let Constantine know that "the German ships then in the Mediterranean would join the Turkish fleet for combined action." Obviously the reference was to the *Goeben* and *Breslau*.

As is so justly said by the American Ambassador, Mr. Morgenthau, in his Memoirs: "The Turkish fleet thereby became stronger than the Russian in the Black Sea, and made it impossible for the latter to attack Constantinople, and not only that, but the *Goeben* and *Breslau* could hold the city in awe by terrorizing the Turks did they fail them." And the Ambassador adds these further truths: "The impartial historian who shall analyse this war and its consequences will determine that the passage of the Straits by the German ships riveted the destiny of Turkey to that of Germany and decided the fate of the Ottoman Empire. . . ."

"Supposing that, having forced the Straits, the British had attacked and sunk their adversaries in the Sea of Marmora, it is probable that the destruction of their ships would have prevented Turkey's entry into the war, for their possession necessitated, when the moment arrived, the union of the Turkish armies with the German."

Mr. Morgenthau says that the British did not

pursue their enemy into the Straits "out of respect for the inviolability of international law"—the Treaties of Paris 1856, and London 1871, forbidding ships of war access to the Dardanelles without special authorization. Yet the British knew, at the expense of their own experience, that the Germans would not respect any treaty. One is driven to believe that if they attacked in some measure but did not pursue, it was rather that they still hoped they might reckon on Turkey and keep her in hand, whereas at Athens we already knew on the 5th August, 1914, from the Kaiser himself, that his alliance with Turkey had been signed the night before.

At that time our Minister of Marine was M. Demerdgis, a man entirely given over to the King, who, since then, turned against M. Veniselos.

While, as I said above, the Adriatic was being searched for the *Goeben* and *Breslau*, these vessels were quietly coaling just off Syra from a German merchant ship, which could not be refused coal on account of our neutrality.

On August 3rd, 1914, Admiral Coundouriotis received an order—sub No. 602—from the Ministry of Marine to remain at his naval base at Moudros in order to avoid the provocation of any incident, and obviously that he might not even know what was happening outside the Straits at a moment when the general situation necessitated, on the contrary, the most minute surveillance. Then, suddenly, on the night of the 8th August, he received an urgent order—sub 639—by which the King's

Minister commanded him to "cable immediately news of the *Goeben* and *Breslau*," which "were at Syra at 10 p.m."

On the 7th August, 1914, Admiral Coundouriotis received the following order :

" Athens,

" 7th August, 1914.

" No. 629. The Ministry of Marine, to Admiral Coundouriotis.

" We draw your attention and desire to be kept currently informed of the movements of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* which, according to our information, have taken an easterly course. They may try to enter the Dardanelles. If necessary send a destroyer to patrol but without raising suspicion that we mean to block the Straits.

" Minister of Marine,

" DEMERDGIS."

Here the order is clearly given by the Minister of Marine. The King, who had known by wire from the Kaiser the direction and intentions of these two German men-of-war, had, perhaps, not thought it opportune to confide to his Minister of Marine that these ships were making for the Dardanelles. At the same time it can be seen how the Minister feared to offend the Germans by allowing them even to suspect that the Greek fleet would think of blocking the Straits.

Notwithstanding all these precautions, a few hours later Admiral Coundouriotis received the following wire which someone must have caused the

Minister to send in order to repair the blunder about patrolling the sea, which should, on the contrary, be left quite free for the Germans!

“ Athens,

“ 7th August, 1914.

“ No. 636. *Very Urgent.*

“ Minister of Marine to Admiral Coundouriotis,
“ Referring to telegraph order 629, cancel last paragraph concerning patrol. Acknowledge receipt at once.

“ Minister of Marine,

“ DEMERDGIS.”

It is obvious that the order of the 8th August, which has previously been mentioned, viz., to cable news, was given after the persons interested were quite aware that the German ships had already safely got into the Straits.

Seeing that he had been forbidden to watch the Dardanelles, why should there be so much interest in the movements of the Germans unless it was to announce the good news to Berlin? There was evidently rivalry between William's ambassador at Constantinople and the Court of Greece as to who should be the first to announce to the “ Master ” the news so eagerly awaited that the German vessels had evaded the British and were safe in the Sea of Marmora.

The two ships entered the Dardanelles on the 10th August at six o'clock in the evening. The British squadron arrived on the 12th, just two days too late. When it arrived, our brave Admiral

Coundouriotis, thinking that the British were going to force the Straits, and prompted solely by his patriotism, and although Greece was still neutral, sent, on his own initiative, Captain G. Leith, of the British Naval Mission, asking the officer commanding the British squadron to be allowed the honour of placing himself—Coundouriotis—with the Greek flotilla at the head of the attacking squadron and to pursue the German ships into the Sea of Marmora. The reply brought back by Leith was that : “ The British squadron having no orders, could do nothing.” I have received all these details from Admiral Coundouriotis.

And to think that the Dardanelles in those days were only defended with some old catapults, though later on the Germans, thanks to Bulgarian help, made the Straits impregnable.

It is impossible to admit that our Minister of Marine did not know all about the entry of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* into the Dardanelles. That a Greek Minister, with the sole purpose of pleasing the ex-King, should have done nothing to prevent the handing over to Turkey of those two formidable units, which were one day to turn their guns on the Greek fleet, and give Turkey a marked superiority over us, will always bring opprobrium on this Minister.

My relations with the Kerrs were always excellent. I was always at their receptions. Mrs. Mark Kerr is a charming woman, and, on leaving Athens, left nothing but regrets and pleasant memories behind her. I had told the Admiral that whenever he

wished to see His Majesty, he had but to ring up and I would take him into the King, without formality or bother, without aide-de-damp or Court Chamberlain, this latter being a stickler for ceremony. In so doing, I thought to serve British interests, and consequently those of my country, for I have always held that they are strictly bound up together. And I always sought the chance of throwing the King into the arms of the French and the British. Unhappily, Kerr—I knew it only too late—decided that the Greek fleet was worthless and was not fit to put to sea. And yet Sir Eric Geddes, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who visited our fleet in 1918, that is, some four years later, declared in the House of Commons that, on the contrary, the little Greek fleet was not to be despised.

VIII

GERMANY AND GREECE

AT the present hour there are people, and serious-minded people too, who continue to discuss whether or no the war was premeditated by Germany. The question does not come within the scope of this book. I will, however, cite the following fact which will be one more among many that the war was looked upon in Germany as a settled thing long before its declaration.

On the 8th March, 1914, I was asked to the Roumanian Legation to a luncheon given by the Minister and Madame Filodor in honour of Monsieur and Madame von Mutius, Counsellor to the German Embassy at Constantinople, who had come, it was said, on a special mission to the King.

There were present at this lunch the Demidoffs, Count Bassewitz, First Secretary of the German Legation, the Court Chamberlain, M. Djuvara, the Roumanian Secretary, and myself. I sat next to the charming and brilliant Madame von Mutius. At her first words I could not help expressing my profound astonishment at hearing a German lady speak impeccable French with the purest Parisian accent. My fair neighbour, for my further mystification, no doubt, said with a smile and with a quite natural air, by way of explanation: "But that is easily understood, for I was born a Bethmann-Hollweg."

A relative of the German Chancellor! I must have opened my eyes and shown my increasing astonishment, for she then became more explicit and said that she had relatives of the same name in France. I have since come to know that Madame von Mutius was a poet and had already published more than one volume of exquisite verse in French, which I have read, but they were under a pseudonym which, unfortunately, escapes me at the moment. For the rest of lunch conversation between us two turned on the frightful situation in which she would find herself in case of war, since she would be in the cruel position of seeing her nearest relatives fighting in opposite camps.

In spite of warnings already appearing on the political horizon I did my best to soothe her, saying that she was wrong to be alarmed, that there was no occasion for her to be so anxious; but Madame von Mutius, nevertheless, returned to the subject with persistence, as if it were a fixed idea with her. One saw well that she was deeply stirred, and that she suffered in merely giving utterance to her fears. Madame von Mutius is one of those women who, by themselves, may make their whole country loved. But I ask myself, knowing French as she knows it, can she be really German at heart?

I cannot say why, but on rising from table I had more than ever the sense of the inevitable. We were, however, still several months from the catastrophe.

After lunch, I had a long talk with the Counsellor of the Embassy. He had not yet seen the King. It did not demand great acuteness to guess the

mission with which von Mutius was entrusted by his Government. Briefly, it was to sound the King regarding concessions to be made to Turkey. It was neither more nor less than to ask Greece if she were willing to give back to the Turks the islands situated along the coast of Asia Minor—Mitylene, Chios, Samos, etc.—or, at any rate, to recognize the suzerainty of the Sultan over them. As one may see, the good ally of a future day was already nursing Turkish interests, at our expense. But this last consideration was always a secondary detail for the partisans of the Constantine faction.

I replied, without beating about the bush, that I was already persuaded that Greece would never accede to such a demand.

Next day I spoke to His Majesty of the conversation I had had with von Mutius, and made him aware of all that I had heard from him on the matter of the islands, as well as the reply that I had given on my own account.

The King did not blame me, but I knew, though he made no mention of it, that he had received von Mutius that morning.

His Majesty then developed all sorts of German theories on the advantages that "Real-Politik" would have for Greece. He spoke of a Germanic "block" which would grow into a great confederation, embracing all the Balkans and comprising Greece; consequently, he saw nothing in the way of recognizing the Sultan's suzerainty in the islands, a suzerainty that would have no practical effect, but merely be "a simple satisfaction," said he, accorded to Turkey in order to seal our

good relations with her. It was clear that His Majesty was simply repeating all that von Mutius had said to him half an hour before, and what he had already said to me at lunch the day before at the Roumanian Legation. The Greek Government had no occasion to discuss the question, because Streit, from motives of which I am ignorant, did not dare to acquaint the Prime Minister, and the German Counsellor left Athens without having gained anything, even as I had told him.

With the exception of some savants, chiefly archæologists, neither Germany nor Austria has ever loved Greece, or done anything for her. The pro-Germans are never tired of singing the Kaiser's praises for leaving Greece in possession of Cavalla. I confess I have not studied the matter deeply, but from what I remember, he could hardly have done otherwise. At that period he had no Bulgarian interests at heart, for they were in opposition to those of his friends the Turks, and consequently, between Greece and Bulgaria, the balance of his inclinations were in favour of his brother-in-law, particularly as no German interest was in question. The pro-Germans at Athens may rest assured that the Kaiser loved his country too well not to sacrifice Greece if the smallest interest of Germany and her allies required it.

Moreover, on the 4th August, 1915, the day following the Entente's decision to impose on Greece the cession of certain parts of Greek Macedonia to Bulgaria, in the chimerical hope of reconstituting the Balkan group, the Kaiser hastened to assure

King Constantine "of the territorial integrity of Greece." But, as every Greek may well ask himself, how could William have ever been able to ensure the integrity of Greece, seeing how he himself has compromised the interests and future of his own country? What have the supporters of Constantine and the Germanophile policy to say to that? Even if Germany had been victorious, she would never have been able to do anything for Greece, because of her obligations to Bulgaria and Turkey. This is just what the ex-King obstinately refused to see from the first day when I told him that, if for no other reason than that, we ought to do all we could to prevent a German victory.

Here are two telegrams, personal messages from William to Constantine, which will give a very clear notion of the Emperor's double dealing as regards Greece.

On the 4th and 5th March, 1915, the eve and the day of the first Crown Council which was to decide whether Greece should abandon her neutrality in favour of the Allies, the Kaiser sent Constantine these two telegrams:

Telegram from H.M. the Emperor and King, to H.M. the King of Greece.

" Berlin,

" 4th March, 1915,

" 7.15 p.m.

" MY DEAR TINO,

" I am informed that the attack on the Dardanelles by the Entente Powers has given rise

to anxiety in Greece. I am glad to think that this apprehensiveness is plain proof that the interests of Greece, as best understood, lie our way—if there were any former doubts on the subject. It should not be difficult, with a little good will, to persuade public opinion that only a Constantinople in Turkish hands can be of use to Greece. Everyone who can claim to have an authoritative opinion agrees that the Turks may well continue to defend the Dardanelles, if Greece refuses help, direct or indirect, to their assailants. At the same time, I would seriously draw your attention, in the interest of your country, and in that of your own welfare, which is bound up with my sister's, to the importance of letting yourself be led into an adventure whose uncertain issue may compromise the gains achieved by Greece in the late wars and the safety of your throne.

“The assurance that you desired to have for the maintenance of your neutrality we have already furnished, as you should have learned by now.

“WILLIAM.”

Telegram from H.M. the Emperor and King, to H.M. the King of Greece.

“Berlin,

“5th March, 1915.

“MY DEAR TINO,

“Your telegram just received ; has crossed with mine of yesterday. I can only say again that I cannot understand how Greece can adopt a break-neck policy, such as would be implied in abandon-

ing her neutrality in favour of the Entente Powers. You should make up your mind once for all that Russian domination in Byzantium would be far more dangerous for Greece than Turkish sovereignty. Then again, the participation of Greece in the war, as against Turkey, would be welcomed by Bulgaria, who would see a way opened to Cavalla. A watchful neutrality is the only course for Greece that wisdom suggests. To follow the voice of the people leads only to disaster. History stands in proof.

“ You have plain testimony of the friendly interest that animates me in regard to Greece, and I shall ever pursue this line of conduct, as long as it is in accordance with my interest and absolute authority. I have always favoured the preservation of the Greek element in Asia Minor, and did not hesitate when there was a question of annexing the islands to Greece. I acted equally in the same sense at Sofia to stop Bulgaria from marching against Greece. You must by no means overlook the menace to the Greek frontiers in Epirus if Italy came into line against the Central Powers.

“ I will consider your wish that I should come to your assistance financially if Greece should give us a guarantee of benevolent neutrality.

“ Cordial greetings to Sophia also.

“ WILLIAM.”

As we see, the ex-Emperor does not contemplate the possibility of there being two ways of looking at the “ properly understood interests ” of Greece. Naturally, her interests lie with those of Germany, already allied with Turkey, and soon to be allied

with Bulgaria also. He only asks for "a little good will" to persuade public opinion in the matter, if any doubts remain to be got over. And then Baron Schenk would make it his business to arrange all that, with the means placed at his disposal for that end. The purpose, among others, was to persuade us that a Constantinople in Turkish hands was a hundred times better for Greece, and the more so because behind the Turks would stand the Germans; the Germans, who had ordered the rooting out of Hellenism from Asia Minor and Thrace.

There were already 450,000 of our compatriots who were refugees in the islands of free Greece, after abandoning all they had in the world in fleeing from massacre. Later, at the instigation of Berlin and of Liman von Sanders, half a million more victims were deported to the interior of Asia Minor. The fate of these poor creatures is still unknown, unless we presume that the majority have perished by a horrible death, or live to lead an existence worse than death.

And the Kaiser not only did nothing, made no personal effort to save them, but, on the contrary, his Staff insisted on the deportations being carried out, and his representative at Constantinople, Baron von Wangenheim, only encouraged the Turkish authorities to complete the suppression of Hellenism in Turkey.

At the present hour there can be no further doubt of the part officially played by the German Government in encouraging the Turks to massacre and deport the Greek and Armenian populations. We

even have the testimony of a German, M. Lepsius, who declares that the persecution of Greeks and Armenians form part of the same programme.*

We have the report of M. Gryparis, Greek Minister in Vienna, to M. Veniselos, which says that the deportations of Greeks from the littoral of Asia Minor were executed in common accord with the German General Staff."†

We know that at the beginning of 1917, Count Metternich, German Ambassador at Constantinople, was recalled by the Kaiser at the request of Enver Pasha and the German authorities at Constantinople, for having "offended" the Turks and "injured" German interests by interceding in favour of Christians.‡ Furthermore, our Minister at Constantinople, M. Callergis, officially informed the Greek Government, according to the admission of the Grand Vizier, that it was at the formal demand of Liman von Sanders, commanding the 5th Army Corps, that the population of Aivali was deported. The Ottoman Government began by refusing to accede to this demand, but it was obliged to give way before the threats of the German General, who said he would not answer for the security of the army if this measure were not taken, while Talaat expressed his fears of lessening the good dispositions of Constantine, the friend of Turkey! Even Talaat, the Turk, did the ex-King the honour of

* Report of 31st July, 1915. Archives of the Legation of Greece at Constantinople, No. 8,477.

† 13 September, 1915. No. 1,599.

‡ Report of M. Callergis, Greek Minister at Constantinople, 28th March 1917. Archive No. 2,338.

attributing to him sentiments and interests he never had for our irredentist kith and kin. His hatred of the man whose sole thought was the liberation of our captive peoples blinded him to the torments that they were suffering. Thus, Talaat the Turk attributed to our King, now dethroned, a patriotism that was never his. And we see even the German Ambassador hesitating in view of this horrible deed. Liman von Sanders, in reply to his protest, stated that German Headquarters were of his opinion for reasons of "military discipline." Reasons that very ill-concealed the intention of Germany to destroy Hellenic influence in those countries so as to make room for German commerce.

And after what I have quoted, the Kaiser has the incredible effrontery to write that "he has always favoured the preservation of Hellenism in Asia Minor!"

Further, he dares to say that he "did not hesitate when it was a question of annexing the islands to Greece." Whereas, not only did Germany, in January, 1914, categorically refuse to take part in the naval demonstration proposed by M. Veniselos, and adopted by England, to impose with one accord on Turkey the decision taken on the subject of the islands, but on the occasion of the Emperor's last visit to Corfu in April, 1914, I know that Wangenheim said to M. Veniselos in the presence of Bethmann-Hollweg and the indispensable Streit that it was "absurd on our part to insist so much on the islands of the Asiatic littoral, for they were bound eventually to fall to the Power who should occupy Asia Minor."

To draw Constantine's attention to all the services he had rendered Greece the Kaiser said further, with an imperturbability we cannot but admire, that he took action at Sofia to stop Bulgaria from marching on Greece. But why should he have exhibited this tenderness for us, were it not to keep the Bulgarian forces intact for action against Serbia, seeing that Bulgaria was assured of our neutrality by the criminal undertaking of the Gounaris cabinet and the King? The Kaiser's sympathies were but lightly engaged, as we may see.

The Kaiser also made allusion, with great kindness, to the possible danger from Italy to our Epirote frontiers. But had we thrown in our lot with the Entente, Italy would never have dared to unmask her batteries and invade Epirus, where she had hopes, on Constantine's dethronement, that the upheaval of a civil war in Greece would give her a good chance. Besides, our dispute with Italy had been settled by M. Veniselos in October, 1914. By this agreement, Vallona had been ceded to Italy, and all the northern part of Epirus, eminently Greek, had been restored to us.

There is one thing that should not escape attention in those telegrams, and that is the Kaiser's admission of *the importance of any co-operation on the part of Greece in the Dardanelles operations*. This goes to support the view so urgently pressed by M. Veniselos, and combated so vigorously by our General Staff and by the King, who described it as chimerical folly. Here we have the Kaiser's own avowal, and he does not disguise his fears of the value of the "direct" or even "indirect"

help that Greece would render to the Allies in the event of her joining them. He scarcely entertains the possibility of resistance by the Turks, should this happen.

The Kaiser speaks also of the danger for Greece should the Russians secure control of Constantinople. That was true. But the Kaiser forgot, or rather ignored, that had Greece gone in when M. Veniselos proposed it, this danger would have been averted by the fact that neither France nor England would at that date have put Byzantium into Russian hands. It was much later, when the Entente had lost all hope of the co-operation of Greece, that the agreement to cede Constantinople to Russia became necessary.

It is interesting to note, in the second of these telegrams, the gradual transformation that comes over the terms employed by the Kaiser when speaking of the "neutrality" of Greece.—He begins by speaking of a "neutrality favourable to the Entente."—It then becomes a "watchful neutrality"—and finally, in the last line of the telegram, "a benevolent neutrality" towards Germany. The Emperor was not a musician for nothing, his crescendo is faultless !

To be just, we must recognize that the Emperor can be frank on occasion. He speaks crude truth to his dear brother-in-law when he assures him that he will continue to interest himself on behalf of Greece "as long as this line of conduct is in accordance with his own interests and his absolute authority !"

Nor does he lose the opportunity to read a moral lesson. He says that "History goes to prove that to follow the popular voice is the road to disaster." The Kaiser was naturally not going to admit that, *per contra*, to follow the voice of the Junker party was also the way to disaster.

It must be owned that Constantine had not intelligence enough to read between the lines of the Kaiser's message. He could have replied to his excellent brother-in-law that if, instead of following his advice, he had the wit and the loyalty to follow the "popular voice" as it spoke by Veniselos, he might be at the present moment a King, and more than that, a glorious King on a throne glorious for all time.

At the time of writing I have before me a dispatch from Salonica, dated the 20th October, 1915, on the subject of the King's projected visit to that place. We had often made plans for it with the French Minister, M. Guillemin, in the hope that the sight of the Allied forces, the acclamation of the Anglo-French troops which His Majesty would, without doubt, have been asked to visit at the front, the sound of the guns and so on, would have awakened his *amour propre* and his war-like feelings. In fact, we built great hopes on this journey of the King's which would have given a certain sanction to the presence of the Allies at Salonica. It had been decided that the King should go in October, in time for the anniversary of the taking of Salonica in 1913.

But we had reckoned without Berlin. Every

order had been given, every detail of the journey arranged, everything in fact provided for and foreseen except the "authorization" of the Kaiser. He came to know of the project in time to stop it, and the telegram to which I refer is the proof of it.

In this telegram the German Minister for Foreign Affairs lets the King know through Theotoky "his satisfaction and his gratitude that His Majesty has given up his promised visit to Salonica in the present circumstances." Could anything afford more convincing testimony of Greece's absolute subjection to Berlin?

The Kaiser had completely forgotten—it was already so distant—the animosity to Greece which had made him send his generals to fight against his brother-in-law and help the Turks in every way in the campaign of 1897, and that to avenge himself on George I., who had not been to Berlin to pay him a visit.

He had also forgotten what he wrote to his unfortunate cousin the Czar on the 20th December, 1898, from his imperial yacht at Constantinople. In this letter, in which he energetically takes up the cause of the Sultan and the Turks, he expresses the wish to see "these blessed little Cretans roasting in hell." Touching solicitude. He reminds him further that the Turkish army has beaten that of Constantine at Larissa and at Domokos, and that on account of Crete, and invokes his intervention to "save" the Sultan.

The Central Powers have never shown any sympathy with Greece ; indeed, Greek interests cannot be reconciled with those of Germany and Austria. They are diametrically opposed. Bismarck understood it well enough, and that is why he set his face against the marriage of the ex-King with Sophia of Hohenzollern, pointing out to the then Kaiser that Germany "had not and could never have any interest in common with Greece so long as England held the supremacy of the seas." Events have shown that Bismarck was right.

IX

SCRUPLES

I CANNOT say what pain it gave me to have to obey General Sarrail's orders to accompany General Regnault as orderly officer in the expedition against Athens in June, 1917. Against Athens! Great God, was it possible! Those two words alone convey with a tragic eloquence the martyrdom of a patriot and the sufferings of an Athenian. For the first time in my life I knew fear. Having lived for three years under fire, so to speak, after having had three horses shot under me, I was now afraid of powder. Fear at the idea that if Athens offered resistance we should turn our guns on her! Horror! How was I to imagine that Dousmanis', Metaxas' and their myrmidons' famous Staff would not let themselves be killed for their King? How should I have believed that there would be no revolt, not a cry, not a protest, when up to the very eve of our debarkation at the Piræus all these pasteboard bravos were threatening to put Athens to fire and sword rather than see their idol cast down?

There are still fanatics to-day who would have us believe that the King in abdicating did so as a sacrifice and to serve his country. It is not true. If there was no blood shed it was because the Staff

and the *Epistrates* had not the time to organize their resistance. If there was no blood shed it was due to the tact of M. Jonnart and to the quickness of General Regnault. The Constantinians, for once, were mistaken about the Allies. For once the Entente knew what to do and sanctioned its decision without change of mind, and without futile threats ;* that is the truth of the attitude of the Constantine faction : it was taken by surprise.

In his book on the Athens operations, General Regnault says that four days after our landing at the Piræus, I asked as a favour to be allowed to return to the Macedonian front. I had suffered too much when on the 12th June, 1917, the *Vérité* having cleared for action at dawn, slowly entered the harbour of the Piræus, her big guns trained, her gunners at their posts. That was a terrible moment when I saw the armed detachments land and hasten in all directions towards the heights of Piræus, in fighting formation, as if to attack under the guns of the Squadron. What a nightmare !

When I was a child and read the history of my country, I could find no words to express my indignation against our ancestors who called the stranger into Greece to settle their quarrels, and here was I, in almost the same cruel situation. Circumstances were different, it is true ; the French and the British came but as friends to help Greece to do her duty, but that duty, all the same, had to

* It could not have needed much, all the same, for the forecasts made by the King and his partisans, of the Entente policy, to have been realized on this occasion, and then to have defeated or at least retarded, the operations at the last moment. If M. Jonnart reads this book he will understand the allusion.

be enforced by foreign bayonets. For, indeed, how were the Bulgarians to be beaten, the Italians expelled, and Epirus and Macedonia liberated, while the ex-King, his allies and myrmidons were directing a constant menace at the very heart of Greece? The thought of this fratricidal war shocked me to such an extent that I returned to Salonica to carry to General Sarrail a report from General Regnault, who kindly made it a pretext to let me depart. General Sarrail reproached me, but in such flattering terms, for quitting the Piræus, that I went back, further encouraged by one for whom I have always had the greatest esteem, and who said that if he were to introduce sentiment into the matter it would be to the loss of our country. As a soldier, I had to obey and, above all, knew how to sacrifice my own feelings; but it was a Way of the Cross to have to carry orders and receive instructions dealing with the movement of troops who were to invest Athens as the result of troubles stirred up by the tardy manifestations of the Constantine faction in favour of the ex-King.

On the 27th June, M. Veniselos left the *Jurien de la Gravière*, and landed for the first time; he had to swear allegiance to the new King, and form his cabinet. I received orders from General Regnault to follow the President to Athens to watch over his person and, in case of alarm, to call out the military. But everything passed off in perfect quiet. We came to the Palace, but I had not the courage to go in. I remained in the courtyard. How could I re-enter the Palace where for so long I had dallied



THE AUTHOR, M. VENISELOS AND GENERAL REGNAULT.

[To face page 234.]

with dreams, with dreams of glory for my country and for my King, a King who was King no more ?

But when, three days after our entry into Athens, I rode with General Regnault in the Champ de Mars, and we passed by the monument erected by the Constantine faction, and I saw this mediæval relic of hatred and stupidity so pompously entitled, "Anathema on Veniselos," a cairn to which, it appears, society furies had each brought her stone amid the plaudits of civil, military and ecclesiastical functionaries, when, I say, I saw this indescribable proof of political and religious fanaticism here in the twentieth century, every scruple that I had entertained in approaching Athens in arms vanished and gave place to resentment.

And when from there I came with the General to visit my brother Basil, who, in the absence of His Royal Highness Prince André, was commanding the 3rd Cavalry Regiment, and learned that, thanks to the wicked intrigues of Majors N. C——, M. M.——, and other fanatics, and of the Prince himself, they had managed to make nearly all the troopers desert so that there were scarcely enough men left to look after the horses ; when, as I say, I came to know of this abominable treason to the flag and to all that an officer holds most sacred, not only did my last scruple vanish, but I found it in me to regret that the taking of Athens had been effected without effusion of blood, and that none of those wretches had made acquaintance with the bayonets of General Regnault. At the cavalry quarters, the General tried to say a few patriotic

words to the officers whom my brother had assembled, but I doubt if he succeeded in moving their feelings. Moreover, with their former Colonel, they were all as yet blinded by passion, not to be reached by any noble, elevated, patriotic sentiment. All that they would recognize were the Veniselists on the one hand, and the Constantinians on the other ; they shut their eyes, and would not see. For them, the question was narrowed to the King—without thought that his faction had betrayed Macedonia, Epirus, and the Greeks of Asia Minor—and Veniselos ; Veniselos who had just, we know with what difficulty, rehabilitated Greece and saved her national honour. In a word, the King of Greece and Veniselos were in rivalry, and that was all they cared to see and know.

Yes, this ignoble gang did not receive the punishment it deserved. M. Veniselos and his party were too clement. That they did deserve is sufficiently proved by the attempt made by two Greek officers* from Goerlitz,† whither Paparigopoulos, aide-de-camp to the ex-King, had been sent to seduce them and send them to Greece in a German submarine on a mission hostile to M. Veniselos ; and that other attempt carried out quite recently in Switzerland, the object of which was to assassinate M. Veniselos at San Remo and bring about in Greece a general upheaval.

* These officers, arrested in Greece, where a submarine had landed them, were tried and shot.

† It was here, in Germany, where the 4th Army Corps, betrayed by its commanders to the Germans and Bulgarians, was transported. The Staff of the Army Corps made the soldiers believe that they were going to Salonica by rail, whereas they were conducted to Sofia and thence to Germany.

Such are the crimes which impose on me the duty of breaking silence.

I will insert here, as I am on the subject of scruples, a conversation I had with M. Veniselos at a very tragic moment.

During those latter days at the Piræus I had left nothing undone to induce M. Jonnart and General Regnault to allow none but Greek troops to enter Athens. But in vain. On the 25th June I went for the second time, at night, on board the *Jurien* and the *Vérité*, by order of General Regnault, to make a statement to M. Veniselos and M. Jonnart on the subject of the advance of the troops which had invested Athens. I told the President my fears of what history would say of our having had recourse to foreign bayonets for our entry into Athens.

M. Veniselos thereupon said, with all sadness and with tears in his eyes, that he proposed, before leaving Salonica, that only Greek troops should be used, but that he had felt unable to insist further after the sad events of December, 1916. History cannot reproach him.

The afternoon of the same day I accompanied the General to the Acropolis. Another pang was mine! I cannot say what I felt on seeing French machine-guns placed for action on the immortal Acropolis. Neither Frenchmen nor M. Veniselos had thought of seeing them there. General Regnault, with the readiest kindness, acceded to my request that they should be removed. And how joyfully did General Castaing, an old acquaintance from the front, make

it his business to see the order carried out. General Castaing, a poet, as well as a good soldier, owned to me that he stationed himself on the Acropolis far more for the poetry of the situation than for its possibilities as a machine-gun position.

No, it was neither Veniselos nor the Allies. Accursed be they who were the cause that, even for an instant, those machine-guns had to be placed on the sacred mount.

On the 5th July another cruel alternative arose. M. Jonnart had, that day, to lay a wreath on the grave of the French victims of the fanaticism of the Constantine faction. By a delicate attention for which I am still profoundly grateful, General Regnault let me know the evening before that he would not have need of my services the next morning. I understood, but I attended him nevertheless. I would drink the cup to the dregs !

The French had the tact to set on the stones that covered their brave dead merely these simple words : " Died for France," with the fatal date and the names. They studiously avoided cutting on the stone the abominable word which would have perpetuated the ignominy of the crime which bereft them of life. I must also pay a tribute to the tact of M. Jonnart who, in his panegyric on the dead, abstained from pronouncing that word. May the noble dead sleep in peace at the foot of the Acropolis ! They were not the first Frenchmen to tread our soil for its defence. Future generations of Hellenes shall bow before their tombs in gratitude.

X

SOME DOCUMENTS

THE following letter from M. Veniselos to the King, dated 7th September, 1914, was published in the White Book. It was addressed to him in consequence of a telegram which, on his own authority, the Admiral at the head of the British Naval Mission in Greece thought himself authorized to send to the Admiralty following an interview with His Majesty.

I give here the unpublished reply of the King, who disavows the Admiral. Protestations of loyalty and frankness towards M. Veniselos as well as good dispositions towards the Entente, alas! as ephemeral, will be noticed in this letter. The first manifestations by the King of divine invocation are also worthy of notice.

I

INCIDENT WITH ADMIRAL MARK KERR.

“ Athens,

“ *7th September, 1914.*

“ M. Veniselos to H.M. the King at Tatoi.

“ SIR,

“ By Your Majesty's instructions Admiral Kerr has communicated to me the text of a telegram, drafted by him on the basis of a conversation

he had with Your Majesty, in reply to the dispatch received from the British Admiralty.

“ I asked the Admiral not to send this telegram, of which I beg to append a copy, before receiving fresh instructions from Your Majesty ; and I now respectfully beg you to accept my resignation so that the complete harmony between the Crown and the responsible Government that is essential at times so critical for the Nation may be restored.

“ After the declaration that Your Majesty authorized me to make to the representatives of the Triple Entente and the dispatches exchanged between the King of England and Your Majesty, I am of opinion that your reply to the new step taken by the British Government (Admiralty) cannot be that Greece refuses to make war against Turkey until she herself has first been attacked.

“ As I have had the honour of informing Your Majesty, we cannot indeed undertake an offensive war against Turkey unless we are assured of the co-operation of Bulgaria, or, at least, of her absolute neutrality. But to declare that in no case, even in such circumstances, would we be disposed to make war against Turkey before being attacked is manifestly contrary to the well recognized interests of the Nation.

“ We must rid ourselves of illusions. Turkey has long been against us—in a state of undeclared war. After having refused to recognize the decision of the Powers regarding the Islands, she commenced, and continues, against Hellenism in Turkey the most violent persecutions to which it has ever been exposed. Two hundred and fifty thousand of our

race have already been expelled, and their goods of an approximate value of five hundred million drachmæ have been practically confiscated. There is no room for doubt that, with the effrontery due to her confidence in the unlimited support of Germany, Turkey will continue these anti-Hellenistic persecutions on an even greater scale. She will expel from the Empire the whole Greek population, numbering several millions, and will confiscate their property, valued at several milliards. At a time when we have the chance of fighting Turkey with the aid of many powerful allies, are we going to let the opportunity pass only to have to undertake war later on by ourselves ?

“ Because we participate in a war against Turkey, as the ally of England, France and Russia, always provided that we have either the active co-operation of Bulgaria or a complete guarantee of her neutrality, we have, indeed, no reason nor, indeed, interest in declaring war against the Central Powers. But even if the latter were to regard us as belligerents, all the eventualities that it is possible to foresee lead us to the view that, whatever may be the result of the war in Central Europe, the local predominance of the group comprising England will be complete in the Near East.

“ By refusing in principle, in all circumstances, our co-operation in a war against Turkey, we do not avoid war, but only postpone it—and even that not for long. It is evident that Turkey will not demobilize before she has settled accounts with us. Such being the case our choice is strictly limited to our either fighting alone against Turkey (in which

case even if we won we could only obtain possession of the Islands without any security regarding the lot of Greeks in Turkey, who would be exterminated with greater violence than ever after such a victory) or carrying on the war sustained by an alliance of three Great Powers, in which case we could obtain not only the repatriation of the exiles, but also the effective protection of the Greek element in the Empire through the support it would receive from those Powers.

“ Thus the path we ought to follow is clearly marked out. But what I think complicates the matter, and gives rise in the minds of Your Majesty and of Mr. Streit to opinions contrary to those I hold, is the wish not to displease Germany by making war against Turkey side by side with the Powers that are hostile to her. Your Majesty is not, however, ignorant of the fact that when England, at the time of my journey in the West last year, declared that she was ready to impose the decision of Europe regarding the Islands, on Turkey, by sending an international fleet if need be, provided Germany agreed, it was Germany that brought the idea to nought by refusing her adherence. Your Majesty also knows that when, later on, the Powers of the Triple Entente proposed to use severe language in the Note addressed to Turkey regarding the Islands, it was Germany that opposed the idea. And it is now Germany again who strengthens the arm of Turkey by furnishing her with ships, money, arms, munitions, and even officers. It is true that these arms are primarily directed against Russia, but they are also directed against us, since Germany, in order

to make us default in our obligations as allies of Serbia, explicitly threatens us that Turkey will fall on our rear if we go to the help of the Serbs against the Bulgars. Even if it be admitted that in the European War, Turkey will only be employed against Russia, and not against us, it cannot be doubted that, if at the end of the war she should be on the winning side, she would become so arrogant that she would not stop at exterminating the Greek element in the Empire, but would also endeavour to wrest the Islands from us, she being helped on the sea by Germany, whilst we should be without friends or support. Do we not also know from the lips of M. de Quadt that Germany (in agreement to-day with the views of Austria), having discovered that the Bulgars are not Slavs but Tartars, proposes, in the event of her being completely victorious, to create a Greater Bulgaria stretching to the Adriatic, as a bulwark against Slavism? Why should we show so much respect towards a Power which seeks in every way to strengthen the two chief adversaries of Hellenism—the Bulgars and the Turks—and why should we show so much indifference towards Powers who, after having made and in all circumstances protected Greece, are still ready to-day to stand by our side if we are attacked by Turkey?

“ I do not overlook, sir, the fact that the condition I impose on our active co-operation with the Triple Entente on land in a war against Turkey, namely, the co-operation or the assured neutrality of Bulgaria, is difficult of realization. But this fact does not do away with, or even diminish, the opposition in ideas and tendencies that has from the

beginning manifested itself between the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the rest of the Government, and that, after the resignation of M. Streit, and his provisional retention at the Ministry, appears to have developed into a difference of orientation between the Crown and the Government.

“In order to facilitate the restoration, which is so necessary, of complete harmony between the Crown and its responsible advisers, I beg to submit my resignation and to take the opportunity of begging Your Majesty to believe in my unalterable devotion to the throne.

“ELEUTHERIOS K. VENISELOS.”

(Translated from the Greek.)

2

“Tatoi,

“7th September, 1914.

“Reply of H.M. the King to M. Veniselos in Athens.

“MY DEAR PRESIDENT,

“I have received your letter, which I must confess has greatly surprised me. I admit unreservedly that your arguments are irrefutable. Furthermore, you had already developed them last Saturday when I saw you in Athens; I think I told you and proved to you that I was in complete agreement with you.

“You will remember what I said regarding the compensations to be settled in advance and their suggestion to England; whereas you thought that we ought not to bargain about our help, but simply

trust to the generosity of England. I think that is a mere difference which ought not to be called a disagreement.

“Let me add that in that conversation, as in the one I had to-day with Admiral Kerr, I had in mind the idea of a declaration of war on us by Turkey. If we took part in a war between the Triple Entente and Turkey it would be necessary to study very carefully the conditions of our collaboration. But all that is nothing to do with Admiral Kerr, and I should not even have discussed the matter with him from a technical point of view.

“I told the Admiral in reply to his communication, with which I was already acquainted through you, that I would entrust the study of this matter to the General Staff, who had in fact already considered it some time ago. As the English Admiralty turned its efforts towards the Gallipoli shore, I added that an examination of the plan of operations might reveal that a landing on the Asiatic shore would be better. There ended my official reply.

“As I know the Admiral very well, and we had in former times had somewhat intimate conversations, I then spoke to him about the situation in general. He knows the Emperor of Germany intimately, and, talking thus to a man who was acquainted with the character of the Kaiser, I said that for my own part I would greatly prefer that Turkey should attack us rather than that we should participate in a war declared on Turkey by the Entente, my reason being that I did not want to put myself out of favour with the Kaiser for ever.

“I even said, in the course of the conversation

(first of all pointing out that it was a question of policy to be discussed between the English and Hellenic Governments, and in any case, did not concern him), that if Bulgaria did not take part in the war, she would remain so strong afterwards that she would find some pretext to attack us.

“ You will thus see, from the way this conversation turned, that I made no communication to the Admiral that he could telegraph to the Admiralty.

“ I do not at all want to show indifference to the Triple Entente, nor want of respect to Germany. I only desire the good of the country and of the people over which I reign by Divine Favour, and I strive only to follow a Hellenic policy.

“ I commenced by saying that your letter had astonished me, and here is the reason.

“ You appear to me to believe that since Saturday, when I last saw you, I have changed my views regarding the policy we should adopt, and that I have communicated my views to Admiral Kerr before discussing them with you. Similarly, that I shared the contrary opinion of the Foreign Minister regarding the line of conduct to follow in certain circumstances, and that I had communicated this view to a third party before telling you. I have always striven to be loyal and frank in my relations with my Ministers, with the Chief of the Cabinet, and especially with M. Veniselos.

“ Do you not think it would have been sufficient to ask me whether the contents of Admiral Kerr’s telegram represented my views ? If I had answered such a question in the affirmative you could have tendered your resignation, but in the present

circumstances I see no grounds for your resignation, which I do not accept.

“Yours sincerely,

“CONSTANTINE R.”

(Translated from the Greek.)

The letters which follow were exchanged between the King and M. Veniselos at the time of the ministerial crisis after the Crown Councils which were to bring about the change of policy through the decision of the King.

The reply of the President is, as always, of an eloquence above praise, while the letter from the King is a written proof that he recognized the obligations involved in the Treaty with Serbia.

3

Regarding the change of Government and of policy.

“Athens,

“22nd February, 1915.

“H.M. the King to M. Veniselos.

“M. LE PRÉSIDENT,

“I have seen M. Zaïmis, who informed me as follows. He considers the cabinet which he will probably constitute, as provisional and temporary. He regards it as necessary to preserve towards Serbia an attitude of neutrality. Consequently, Salonica will remain at the disposal of the Serbs for such transit as they may find necessary.

“M. Zaïmis added that, having definitely retired from politics and not contemplating a return to public life, he could not be regarded by you as an

opponent. But he thought that to govern the country by Royal Decrees would be to show a want of respect to the Chamber* and the Majority.

“ For all these reasons he wished to know whether you would lend your support in the Chamber to the passing of the laws he would have to propose.

“ He makes this a condition of his forming a cabinet.

“ Yours sincerely,
“ CONSTANTINE R.”

4

“ Athens,
“ 22nd February, 1915.

“ Reply of M. Veniselos to H.M. the King.

“ SIR,

“ Your Majesty knows how ill-omened for Greece I regard the new policy which is to be inaugurated by the change of cabinet under whatever auspices this change may take place, and notwithstanding the precautions I had the honour of explaining to Your Majesty.

“ Your refusal to participate even partially in the operation against Constantinople could not be considered by England otherwise than as a breach of the promise given at the beginning of the war. This refusal will be attributed to Your Majesty's desire, in order to follow a dynastic policy, not to follow another policy which might lead to a quarrel with the Kaiser.

“ If England came to such a conclusion, she could not be expected to continue to desire the aggrandise-

* The King at this time still respected the Chamber and the Majority.

ment of Greece, for, if such a Greece were enlarged, there would be the risk of one day beholding her by the side of Germany, seeing the hereditary monarchical institution in our country.

“ Therefore I explained to Your Majesty that I regarded the inauguration of this new policy as equivalent to the abandonment of all idea of future aggrandisement and of all hope of seeing Greece perhaps even doubling her territories in Asia Minor. Similarly we should not be able in the future to count on the protection of our recently acquired possessions if the principal factor of this policy were lacking. I mean the support of England, support such as we could not look for from Germany, as that Power has both economic and political designs on Asia Minor, and would consequently be implacably opposed to any political intentions on our part.

“ If Your Majesty would recall all that I explained to you at such length yesterday, and also take into consideration all the risks we run (if it were only in regard to the conversation of this acquisition) through the policy just inaugurated by the change of Government, Your Majesty would concede to me that M. Zaïmis, in requesting me to share his responsibility by giving him my support in Parliament, is really asking too much. For to ask me to approve this policy would be a flagrant contradiction of the parliamentary system which binds our national life together.

“ If M. Zaïmis is willing to adopt a policy which, he appreciates, entirely lacks the approval not only of the majority in the Chamber, but also of public opinion, and consequently finds himself at present

outside the Constitution, he can take upon himself the much smaller responsibility of governing with the help of Royal Decrees. For the rest, in view of external conditions, I promised Your Majesty not to oppose such a procedure. But if, on the other hand, M. Zaïmis believes that public opinion approves the change of Government, and considers the time propitious for a General Election, he has only to appeal to the country and order an Election.* He will then be, both in form and in fact, within the Constitution.

“ Your Majesty’s devoted servant,
“ ELEUTHERIOS K. VENISELOS.”
(Translated from the Greek.)

The following telegram was addressed from Paris to the King by his brother. It shows, as I have already said, that of all the princes of the Royal Family of Greece, His Highness Prince George alone thinks of Greece as his native land.

5

“ No. 496.

“ Paris,

“ *27th April, 1915.*

“ Telegram from Prince George of Greece to H.M. the King.

“ Situation extremely serious and entire future of Nation depends on your decision. After all the steps taken by the late Government and the present Government with Triple Entente, and specially after last proposal fleet and armed guard

* The election took place and the Veniselist party was returned with an overwhelming majority.

against Bulgar peril accepted by Powers, we have seriously compromised ourselves, by which I mean that by now refusing our co-operation or proposing it only subject to conditions that we know cannot be accepted, we expose ourselves to the certain danger of seeing England and France even hostile in the future, which would mean the ruin of Greece. Our interests in the Mediterranean and in Asia Minor will be sacrificed to the interests of Italy and others, and nothing will be able to save us. I implore you on my knees with all my soul and strength, in your own interest, in the interest of the Nation whose destiny depends at the present moment entirely on you. March in the name of God. Not to do so is certain suicide for you and for the Nation.

“GEORGE.”

(Translated from the French.)

I give herewith three unpublished letters from M. Veniselos to the King. The reader will find it difficult to understand how the latter could fail to yield to such irrefutable and sound arguments as those put forward by his Prime Minister.

In the letter of the 13th September, 1914, further proof is given of the loyalty of M. Veniselos towards the Serbians and of his devotion to the Entente when he advises his Sovereign to give tangible proof of the sincerity of our intentions by providing for a free passage to the Allies through Salonica to enable them to go to the aid of Serbia.

6

“ Athens,

“ *13th September, 1914.*

“ M. Veniselos to H.M. the King at Tatoi.

“ SIR,

“ I feel impelled to draw Your Majesty's very special attention to the contents of the dispatch from M. Dragoumis,* dated the 12th instant. We thus have official information that if the Bulgarian grand manœuvres take place it will be between Eastern Roumelia and Western Thrace. If Roumania persists in refusing to permit the transport across the territory of warlike material destined for Bulgaria, the latter will find it difficult to open her campaign. But, while bearing in mind the firm decision of Roumanian policy, we cannot be absolutely sure that she will persist in this refusal to the end. Furthermore, in case of an attack on Serbia, if the Austro-Germans held the upper hand on the N.E. frontiers of Serbia, they would have an opening for the transport of warlike material to Bulgaria. In this case again the danger of a Bulgarian attack would be a grave menace to us, seeing that thanks to her harvest and to a recent loan granted to her by the Austro-Germans, she would have the means to declare war on us, whereas we should not be able to do so for want of money. And it seems to me quite improbable that after our repeated refusals to support the Entente Powers they would be disposed to give us financial assistance.

“ We ought to prevent this danger by giving a

* Greek Minister at Petrograd.

tangible proof of the sincerity of our intentions regarding the declaration made to the Entente at the beginning of the war, that all our sympathies were with it, and that we should be disposed to fight by their sides if only we could be guaranteed against the Bulgarian peril.

“ In my opinion the best way to prove it to them would be to make an official declaration to England to the effect that we would be ready to permit the passage through Salonica of the Franco-English troops destined to go to the help of Serbia. Further, we ought to promise that if the Bulgars attacked them we were equally determined to come to their aid and to that of Serbia.

“ I am convinced that even if this proposal were accepted we should not incur any serious risk. It is evident that such action on our part would constitute a breach of our neutrality, with the consequence that the Austro-Germans might declare war. I doubt, however, whether this would be likely, for such a declaration of war could only result in our mobilizing against them our five Army Corps, which otherwise would take no part in the struggle. They would only declare war on us in the event of their seriously contemplating operations against Salonica. But in that case such an eventuality could not be avoided if the Austro-Germans destroyed the Serbian Army. In all circumstances we should then defend Salonica not only with all our own forces, but with the help of the French and the English.

“ If the Austro-Germans did not declare war on us, but the Bulgars did, we should fight them not

done by everybody her only resource would be to come to an understanding with Bulgaria.'

"As I had the honour of explaining to Your Majesty this morning, we shall not avoid this danger even if Bulgaria should attack Serbia. After having crushed Serbia (abetted by the Austro-Germans), the Bulgars could approach the Entente with the declaration that they were prepared to retain only the purely Bulgarian territories and a part of the disputed territory, leaving all the rest to Serbia, provided the Entente Powers would support an attack against us designed to seize Greek Macedonia.

"Your Majesty is right in giving credence to Germany's assurance that Bulgaria will not attack us. But, as I had the honour of remarking this morning, it is not a question of German action, but of Bulgarian action. If Bulgaria, either now or when circumstances have changed, regarded it as of vital importance to attack us in order to drive us beyond the river Aliacmon, would Germany declare war on Bulgaria to force her to respect her engagements? Germany, who is fighting against powerful and numerous enemies, would not be able to detach troops to fight against Bulgaria also. It must also be borne in mind that the latter will have Germany at her mercy, inasmuch as she permits communication between the Germans and the Turks across her territory.

"I have felt it to be my duty once more to submit these considerations to Your Majesty on the occasion of the enclosed telegram from M. Gryparis.

"Your Majesty's most obedient servant,

"ELEUTHERIOS K. VENISELOS."

“ Athens,

“ 12th September, 1915.

“ M. Veniselos to H.M. the King at Tatoi.

“ SIR,

“ I beg respectfully to draw Your Majesty’s attention to the contents of three telegrams, two of the 11th September, from M. Gennadios,* and M. Psycha,† and one from M. Naoum,‡ dated the 12th.

“ From this series of telegrams it is evident that Roumania has definitely turned towards the Entente, and only fears to make this fact known to the Central Empires because of her geographical position and of the military situation on the Eastern front. It is also clear that Roumania has never declared to Bulgaria, either directly or through Berlin, as was cabled by M. Theotoky, her desire to remain indifferent to any attack on Serbia. Roumania appears on the contrary to have informed Sofia that she would regard any aggression against Serbia as a hostile act. Consequently, the assurance of M. Radoslavoff regarding the neutrality of Greece || and Roumania is incorrect even with regard to the latter.

“ Thus Bulgaria again finds herself isolated from the other Christian Balkan States. It would seem that God still blinds her governors who thus guide

* Minister in London.

† Minister at Bucharest.

‡ Minister at Sofia.

|| Clear proof that M. Veniselos knew nothing yet of the criminal declaration of the King and Gounaris to Bulgaria.

her to a dangerous course from which she cannot emerge otherwise than completely crushed.

“ Your Majesty’s most obedient servant,
“ ELEUTHERIOS K. VENISELOS.”

(Translated from the Greek.)

I give here several reports handed to His Majesty regarding certain conversations which I had with the Minister of Bulgaria, as well as a report of what had been told me by the British Military Attaché.

In everything that M. Passaroff told me will be noticed, above all, his efforts to detach us from Serbia and to alienate Roumania. During one or two of those conversations he urged his protestations of love for Greece to such an extent as to repeat on several occasions that it was not in our interest to allow the marriage of the ex-Crown Prince with H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth of Roumania, but that it would be better for both countries that he should marry Princess Eudoxie of Bulgaria. I did not dare to mention this to the King on the first occasion even in a jocular way. Had M. Passaroff made this proposal two years later, it would certainly have had a chance of success.

It is interesting to note the anger with which the Bulgarian Minister defended himself at that time for having had luncheon or even only conversed with his colleagues of the Central Powers, of whom, less than a year later, he was to become the inseparable companion and whom he was to meet at the King’s table.

Reports to H.M. the King of interviews with M. Passaroff, the Bulgarian Minister. (Translated from the Greek.)

“ Athens,

“ 15th October, 1914.

“ I lunched to-day with M. Passaroff, and learned that he had received a visit yesterday from the German Minister. The latter confided to him that M. Radoslavoff had informed the German Minister at Sofia that Greece was mobilizing. Count de Quadt had also confidentially informed him that Turkey had 150,000 men on the Bulgarian frontier. M. Passaroff immediately communicated these facts to M. Politis.

“ This morning the Bulgarian Minister also had a visit from Chalip Bey,* who ironically asked him if he had opened *pourparlers* with M. Veniselos regarding common action against Turkey.

“ Speaking of common action, M. Passaroff said to me, in so many words: ‘ It would be easy to come to an understanding. If you contributed 100,000 to 120,000 men, and we 300,000, we should soon crush Turkey, and we ought to do it at once so as to deal a decisive blow.’

“ My impression is that Bulgaria is uneasy. She fears us as much as Turkey, and wishes to ensure our help.

“ To my question why the Bulgars did not themselves at once march on Adrianople, he quite frankly replied that they feared Roumania, against whose bad faith and duplicity he never ceases to rail on all occasions. He indicated her as the source of all the intrigues designed to sow discord between Greece and Bulgaria, and added that it was across

* Turkish Minister in Athens.

Roumania that munitions and war material were being passed to Turkey, as was done during the first period of our Balkan wars. On the other hand, in answer to a question I put to him, he categorically denied the passage across Bulgaria of German war material intended for Turkey. He also denied the mission of the Secretary of King Ferdinand to Constantinople to which reference has been made in the Press.

“He assured me that he had proofs that Chalip Bey was immediately informed of everything that was said in the presence of the Roumanian *chargé d'affaires*, M. Djuvara, from which he came to the conclusion that there was certainly an understanding between the two countries.

“He complained that, whilst he, for his part, neglected nothing that could strengthen the bonds between our two countries, we, on the other hand, interpreted everything amiss, and did nothing to prevent ill-feeling towards Bulgaria.

“G. M.”

It is clear that at this time Passaroff did not dream that the ex-King would one day ally himself not only with the Bulgars, which the Minister was striving his hardest to bring about, but also with our other traditional enemy, the Turk.

10

2nd Report.

“Athens,

“30th October, 1914.

“I had spoken to M. Passaroff the day before yesterday of the report that the Bulgars had placed mines at Porto Lago. He immediately cabled to

Sofia, and told me to-day that the report was officially denied, as he had hastened also to tell M. Veniselos this morning. He said it was a rumour spread by Roumania.

“He again complained about the Athens Press in general; and in particular that some papers had stated that he had lunched and had a long conversation yesterday with the German and Austrian Ministers. This he regarded as manifestly intended to give a certain impression. . . .

“Finally he said: ‘I give you my word, once for all, that when I ask you to communicate something to H.M. your King, I am the mouthpiece of my own. And be sure you say to His Majesty that King Ferdinand is animated by the best of feelings towards Greece and earnestly desires a *rapprochement* between our two countries.’

“G. M.”

II

3rd Report.

“Athens,

“10th November, 1914.

“M. Passaroff told me to-day that it was absolutely contrary to the interests of Greece to support Serbia with such zeal, to which I replied that I was not aware of any special zeal and that we were only respecting our treaty. He pursued the matter, saying that if any enemy attacked us, Serbia would not be in a position to help us and that, such being the case, it would be absurd for us to go to the aid of Serbia if Bulgaria attacked her, and that it was really madness to continue to talk of alliances and treaties in the existing state of ‘international anarchy.’

“For the first time he openly spoke to-day of the necessity for Monastir to revert to Bulgaria. On my saying that in Monastir the Greek element was wholly preponderant, beyond all possible comparison with others, he admitted that that was indisputably the case so far as the town itself was concerned, but not in regard to certain small villages in the neighbourhood. ‘But,’ he added, ‘we can always come to an arrangement. It would be to your interest to be separated from Serbia by us (!!). Your future demands that we should be united; otherwise you, as well as we, run great risks.’ As we parted, his final words were: ‘Believe me, your alliance with Serbia is only in appearance.’

“I hastened to reply emphatically that I was absolutely convinced that for nothing on earth would the King (?) or M. Veniselos fail to meet their engagements, particularly towards allies who were at the moment overwhelmed. I added that it was also, before everything, necessary to take into account the feeling of the nation which, at any rate for the time being, was far from being well disposed towards Bulgaria. If by some unforeseen conjuncture of circumstances we were later on to be led into a real entente with her it would, above all, be necessary to allow time for a change to be brought about.

“To my question why, at least, they did not take up a position on the Thrace frontier line which had been conceded to them, he replied, without hesitation, that the Turks had fortified themselves there and had some 200,000 men on the spot.

“He pressed me as to whether it was true that

the Greek and Roumanian Ministers had made simultaneous representations in Sofia. Not being able to reply, I asked in my turn why he did not put these questions direct to M. Veniselos and M. Politis, to which he replied frankly that before doing so he wanted to know the views of the King and the Government on the subject.

“ I also asked him whether the news circulated this morning, that Russia had decided to demand, and if need be to insist, on the transfer of her troops intended for the help of Serbia across Bulgaria, was true. M. Passaroff replied with anger: ‘ You could not find a single Bulgarian Minister who would dare to permit that. We should refuse, even at the cost of war with Russia.’

“ He protested against the epithet ‘ Bulgaroctone,’ ostentatiously applied to His Majesty every time he was mentioned by the newspapers.

“ G. M.”

12

4th Report.

“ Athens,

“ 19th December, 1914.

“ M. Passaroff complained bitterly that the Greek Government did absolutely nothing towards a *rapprochement* with his country, and criticized the violent *communiqué* of our Minister in Petrograd against Bulgaria, regarding the frontier incidents. He found serious fault with M. Politis, because this morning, at the Foreign Office, he upheld our Minister in Petrograd.

“ He also complained of the Government’s *com-*

muniqué declaring that Serbia could not be allowed to make any territorial concession to Bulgaria without our first agreeing. He said that this declaration has had a deplorable effect in Sofia. I ventured to reply, without, of course, discussing whether the declaration was well founded or not, that my purely personal opinion was that Greece could not entirely disinterest herself in the districts of Monastir, Doiran and Gheugheli, which were inhabited almost entirely by Greeks.

“He made a further complaint regarding the conversation between the King and the Roumanian Minister when the latter presented his credentials. ‘Why was the Treaty of Bucharest mentioned? It was a direct reminder against Bulgaria.’

“To these complaints I replied by complaining, in my turn, of M. Radoslavoff’s recent declarations. Then he said that up to ten days ago the Bulgars had given no cause for the slightest grievance, except some few local differences of no importance, that during his journey to Gioumoultchina, King Ferdinand had sought opportunities to show his interest in the Greek refugees. That this was an advance to Greece to which we had not responded, as we had the opportunity of doing, on the occasion of the journey of Prince Nicolas, who, returning from Bucharest with the members of the diplomatic mission, carefully avoided even crossing Bulgarian territory, although the Bulgars would have been happy to receive and *fête* him.

“In these protests of the affection of the Bulgarian Royal House for the Greek Royal Family, M. Passaroff went so far as to repeat to-day that

a matrimonial alliance with Bulgaria would be to the interest of Greece.

“ G. M.”

13

5th Report.

“ Athens,

“ 4th April, 1915.

“ The Bulgarian Minister told me yesterday, with regard to the Valandovo affair, that the *coup* was prepared by the Young Turks, the Austrians, and the Serbian Secret Society of ‘The Black Hand,’ of which the President was said to be General Damiani Popovitch, Military Governor of Macedonia.

“ The object of the movement was to raise the Turk and Bulgarian population against the Serbian rule, and so bring about the fall of the Passitch Ministry.

“ He assured me that official Bulgaria had taken no part whatever in the Valandovo affair.

“ G. M.”

14

6th Report.

“ Athens,

“ 24th April, 1915.

“ The Bulgarian Minister told me this morning that if Greece decided to abandon her neutrality, it would be well to let him know, so that the two Governments could come to an understanding regarding common action.

“ To my question regarding the attitude that Bulgaria would take up if Greece abandoned her neutrality, he replied that he was convinced that

Bulgaria would also attack Turkey if she were assured of concessions in Macedonia. I replied that personally I considered the thing absolutely impossible, particularly before the end of the war and the final settlement of dismembered Turkey.

“ He pressed me very much to tell His Majesty that he had a special cipher with King Ferdinand, and that if ever King Constantine so desired, he would gladly place himself at his disposal. I did not hide my astonishment on this point, and ventured some scathing remarks ; but he so insisted that I have felt bound to communicate to His Majesty what the Bulgarian Minister said.

“ G. M.”

15

Report to H.M. the King of a conversation with Sir Thomas Cunningham, English Military Attaché.

“ Athens,

“ 15th November, 1915.

“ During lunch to-day the English Military Attaché said several things to me which I regard it as my duty to submit to His Majesty.

“ People in England quite appreciate the delicate position of the King, especially after the deplorable result of the English policy regarding Serbia. If Greece had frankly said then that she no longer had confidence in English diplomacy, after the Serbian *débâcle*, public opinion would have forgiven her and have retained good feeling towards her ; whereas, the refusal of Greece to recognize, in respect of Serbia, the *casus fœderis* has alienated

all sympathies from us, seeing that the situation regarding our relations and obligations towards our Allies has in no wise changed since last February.

“ In any case, although personally he considers any threat against Greece as perfectly odious, ‘ To be sincere,’ he said, ‘ this change of opinion will no doubt lead to strong measures being taken towards you.’

“ We ought absolutely to brush aside any idea that the needs, purely military, of England hid political designs against us. The view of the Entente was that the help of the Anglo-French armies had been asked for simply to fulfil one of the clauses of the Serbo-Greek Treaty. The prompt observance by the Allies of this clause should decide Greece to meet her obligations without further delay. The Serbs, having been informed of this decision, were now justified in accusing us of default. After this invitation from Greece to the Entente, the Serbs were entitled to expect every facility from us independently of any change of Government in Greece.

“ It was evident that, now that the Bulgars had taken sides against the Allies, circumstances might arise which no one could foresee ; for if the Serbian Army was beaten or surrendered, the Allies would not be in a position to do anything for them at the moment. But, if the brave Serbs continued the struggle, even by guerrilla fighting, the English would never abandon them.

“ Sir Thomas did not hide from me the tactical dangers and difficulties of a retreat, not to speak of the question of prestige. But his personal

opinion was that the Allies were too deeply involved to abandon the contest.

“ ‘With regard to the Greek point of view,’ he added, ‘which is to prevent the Bulgars from advancing by the Doiran salient, you say that in having invited us and permitted us to land in Macedonia, you only yielded to superior force. We have no sort of guarantee, whatever the King may wish to do to defend his frontiers, that he may not then also have to yield to superior force. The situation being thus doubtful, we demand that your line of action shall be at once clearly defined. We demand, in short, that Greece shall declare to Germany also that she has had to yield to *force majeure*.’

“ ‘So far as the Balkan position in the matter is concerned,’ he said, ‘as regards the operations in Macedonia independently of the Serbian question, the lack of mountain artillery may for the moment limit the fight to purely defensive operations. Between now and the spring much may happen ; the Germans may be obliged to withdraw their troops and send them to other fronts. Greece would then have the opportunity either alone or with the English, having Sofia as objective, to take part in the fight with a view to crushing Bulgaria and re-conquering Thrace.’

“ For these reasons Greece must not renounce all idea of intervention, but maintain armed neutrality and be ready for eventualities. Meantime, we should be able to find a *modus vivendi* which would satisfy the different authorities in Salonica and would give us time to complete and

perfect our preparations without bringing about an impasse.

“ If I understand the matter aright, Sir Thomas Cunningham intends submitting a report to his Government on the following lines :

“ 1. The Allies should supply us with a sufficient number of field batteries and the necessary ammunition in five months' time.

“ 2. They should construct roads and railways from Salonica to the front.

“ 3. They should lend us the financial assistance necessary to maintain our army during this period on a war footing.

“ 4. They should furnish all necessary material and equipment.

“ After having listened attentively and taken note of all these important declarations which I promised to communicate to His Majesty, I asked Sir Thomas how it was that, having had the honour of seeing the King this morning, he had not spoken of these matters directly with him. To this the Military Attaché replied that His Majesty appeared to be still so impressed by the last note from the Powers, delivered yesterday, that he did not think the moment opportune to do so.

“ G. M.”

(Translated from the Greek.)

It was the fear for my country, inspired in me by the autocratic conduct of the King which became more and more violent, that made me write

this letter to M. Zographos, who was at one moment to have been entrusted with the formation of a cabinet.

16

“ Kifissia,

“ 30th August, 1916.

“ To M. G. Zographos, ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs.

“ Rumour has it that His Majesty purposes entrusting you with the formation of a new cabinet. If this is the case I take the liberty of reminding you of certain things you said, when dining here with me the other evening, regarding a message you stated you had sent to the King. Some of the things contained in that message would be fatal if they served, as I fear may be the case, as the basis of your political programme. Let me explain.

“ You told me that more than a month ago you had caused it to be said to His Majesty, in anticipation of the abandonment by Roumania of her neutrality, that it would be well to enter into negotiations with the Entente for the simultaneous abandonment of Greek neutrality. Excellent! But you added that ‘ he was always master of the situation.’

“ Now that is what disturbs me. The King is unfortunately only too much inclined to absolutism—a tendency against which I have never ceased to struggle. He must on no account be encouraged in that direction now, for it would mean immediate disaster for Greece. Furthermore, the

King, on the contrary, stands on by no means firm ground. Everything is slipping and crumbling around him. Master of the situation he has certainly been—particularly in February, in September, and once during your ministry ; but since then, he has been far from being master of the situation, and if events have not already taught you so, they very soon will. I greatly fear that now, in the longed-for circumstances of our marching, the Entente may give us subsidies, munitions and warlike material, no doubt, but nothing more. We should not even have those things, if we ventured to put forward any pretensions to territorial compensations. The most we could hope for from their benevolence would be the recovery of what we have so unworthily betrayed and abandoned to the Bulgars.

“If you accept office, my dear Zographos, tell the King what you like, but never say anything to him that could in any way awake and quicken in him the hereditary instincts of an autocracy which is only dormant, and is as out of date as it is disastrous. Believe me, he leans only too much in that direction.

“G. M.”

(Translated from the French.)

This speech was delivered by M. Veniselos at Canea, in Crete, at the time of the proclamation of the Provisional Government. I publish these fragments to prove that, even at the eleventh hour, the great patriot invited the ex-King to place himself at the head of the national movement which

was to permit us to win back our honour and help the Allies in the common struggle.

17

Speech made by M. Veniselos at Canea, on the 13th September, 1916, when proclaiming the Provisional National Government.

“ The cup of bitterness and humiliation is overflowing.

“ A policy of which we do not seek the motive has brought about in less than eighteen months such national disasters that a comparison of the Greece of then and the Greece of to-day makes one doubt whether he is thinking of the same country.

“ The Crown, urged on by evil advisers, has sought to institute a personal policy which has alienated Greece from her traditional friends only to throw her into the arms of her hereditary enemies.

“ The results of this policy are, at home, the overthrow and disintegration of the Constitution ; abroad, isolation and contempt. All around us are distrust and scorn ; at home is anarchy. Our traditional friends, the protectors of Greece, are obliged to take measures for their own safety on our soil, regarding us as enemies. Our lands are occupied by our ancient foes. After having allowed our Serbian allies to be defeated, we have helped the Bulgars to conquer. We prevented the former from crossing our territory to meet the common foe, and we allowed the latter to penetrate our frontiers to help in his triumph.

“ The Greek army, victorious in 1912 and 1913,

abandons without a blow the regions conquered three years ago.

“The enemy, defeated then, advances with arrogance over ground that is yielded without a fight and on which the troops surrender voluntarily. Rupel, Cavalla, our fortresses, our towns, are occupied and their inhabitants flee before the invader. The Greek flag, humiliated and mournful, is lowered before the Bulgarian flag, while the Greek army is bidden to witness passively the spectacle of the Nation crucified. . . . *How happy we should be if, at the supreme moment, the King decided to place himself at the head of the national forces*, so that, in indissoluble union, we might press on the application of the national policy. But if that may not be it only remains for us, as our sole means of safety, to act with the part of the nation—moved by the conviction that, unless she collaborates with the Allied Powers in the recasting of the East after the Great War, Greece is rushing to ruin. . . .

“We appeal to every element of the nation that appreciates that to continue to suffer the humiliations and disasters resulting from the policy at present followed is equivalent to our death as a nation.

“We enter the lists with the conviction that the Nation, called to action in the absence of the State, will again accomplish the miracle necessary to set the Nation once more on the road that it forsook a year and a half ago.”

(Translated from the Greek.)

I give here two letters which I allowed myself, strictly on my own responsibility, to address to the Ministers of France and England, seeing that I had left the Court and was now simply a soldier again. I trust I shall be excused the, at times, somewhat bitter tone in which I express myself in view of the uncertain fluctuations of events at that period, and I can only hope that these gentlemen may not bear me too great a grudge for the style of my letter, which was perhaps more cavalier than diplomatic.

18

" The Front,

" 27th October, 1916.

" To M. Guillemin, French Minister in Athens.

" MY DEAR MINISTER,

" From what we hear, you and Sir Francis appear to have been deceived by the King of Athens.

" You know even better than I what was the state of mind of the Entente regarding King Constantine scarcely a month ago, and particularly the disposition of English diplomacy concerning him. I really cannot account for this sudden change on the part of the English Government, which has actually seen proof in writing, not to speak of other proofs, of the treachery of the King and the intrigues of the Queen. How then comes it about that the Entente can thus change its views from day to day,*

* On the 24th October, 1916, an official *communiqué* from the French Legation in Athens announced nothing more nor less than the "reconciliation" of the King with the Entente.

and to-day become the defender of a King who is fatal alike to Hellenism and to the Entente ?

“ Without insulting you by believing it possible that France and England could ever abandon the handful of patriots who doubly risk their lives here for the national cause, I beg to adjure you, with all the force at my command, to beware of the King.

“ The King has deceived you in the past, is deceiving you now, and will continue to deceive you to the end. The King no longer considers you nor the English, nor anyone else, as his enemies. The only enemies to-day are M. Veniselos and the Army that we exerted ourselves to create in order to uplift the fatherland once more and to regain our honour, at the same time helping you and the Serbs. As for him, he has lost his honour, and has no fatherland. To accomplish what is at present his sole aim, namely, to detach you from M. Veniselos, he will flatter you, will promise you everything to make you abandon him, ready, when he has succeeded, again to turn against you and betray you for the sake of the Germans.

“ Have no illusions ; do not believe, I implore you, in his pretended good will. If you should now appear to lean towards the Government of Athens, you would run the risk of extinguishing our enthusiasm for ever. Take care for your own sake as well as for ours. Half measures have always been fatal to you in your Eastern policy. You have to deal with a King who only seeks to work out his own salvation and that of his entourage, without caring a bit about Greece. Please show this letter

to Sir Francis ; it reflects the opinion of all of us here.

“ Yours, etc.,
“ G. M.”

19

“ The Front,

“ 19th February, 1917.

“ To Sir Francis Elliot, English Minister in Athens.

“ MY DEAR SIR FRANCIS,

“ I seize the opportunity to send you in haste a few lines to give you some idea of the astonishment we feel at the attitude shown by the Entente in its recent relations with the Athens Government. I write with the freedom and frankness induced by the termination of your letter.

“ The avowal of uneasiness caused by those wretched villains, the Epistrates, is of itself a condemnation of the policy hitherto followed by you. The Allies have condemned our movement to inaction since its birth by imposing the most onerous restrictions. They have promised the King that they will not allow our activities to extend to Old Greece. By so doing they have, contrary to their own interests, almost destroyed, or at least checked, the rise of the national spirit, which would have been such a help to you. You have delivered the Veniselists, bound hands and feet, absolutely defenceless to the Constantine party.

“ And now your shufflings, your hesitations, your gropings, your entire lack of skill and, even more, of means of making your will respected, both because

of the monarchical solidarity of certain Powers and because of the intrigues of Italy, paralyse you to the point of again delivering the patriots to the assassins of Athens.

“ England still doubts the treachery of the King, as she doubted that of the Turks, as she doubted that of the Bulgars. Yet I pointed out, more than a year ago, precise facts regarding all three. I am sure that at the Foreign Office even to-day they are advocating the Balkan policy of the Bouchiers, the Buxtons, etc., instead of believing the evidence. You are, perhaps, not aware that last winter Constantine . . .

“ Yes, my dear Sir Francis, you are playing a very dangerous game, and run the risk of losing the small remnant of prestige that still remains to the Entente in Greece, and of putting the Constantine party in the right by this open lack of energy, and by your eternal threats and ultimatums, which are no longer taken seriously by the Athens Government.

“ Since you have not the power and the means to dispose your will, why do you not let us use our own means ? Why give undertakings on our behalf which you are not sure that you can eventually carry out, and which only paralyse us while showing your weakness and differences ?

“ Believe me, I do not write simply as a Greek, but also as a friend of England and France, that I see continuing to go astray. These two countries declare that they are fighting for the freedom of peoples, but how will they be able to justify themselves in the eyes of history and humanity if they

thus allow to be crushed under their very eyes this movement for liberty, which they seem to wish to stifle at its very birth for the benefit of the King of Athens!

“Think over what I say; act without loss of time. Strike hard or let us act. Not to pluck out the evil by its roots may cost you very dear. But before taking up a firm attitude in Athens, do it in Rome and Petrograd. You should do so for our sakes to-day; later on it may be for your own.

“Yours, etc.,

“G. M.”

I now venture to give a few letters of an entirely private nature which may help the reader to form an idea of the division that King Constantine caused in Greece and the discord that arose even in families and between the most intimate friends.

20

“The Front,

“30th October, 1916.

“MY DEAR ———, at Athens,

“On receipt of your letter I hastened to reply, being so delighted to see that you were on our side. But this morning, having a moment to myself, I have re-read your letter, and write after mature consideration.

“In the first place I notice that you still find fault with the blunders, mountains of them, as you say, committed by the Entente.

“History will prove one day that they are not all on our side. The King has always shown bad

faith towards the Allies. How can you expect the Powers still to show consideration for Greece—even *our* Greece, when they see you remain calm and unmoved under the most violent outrages, which indirectly recoil on us—the sequestration of the Fleet, the occupation of the Post Office, the seizure of the railways, etc.—in a word, the entire occupation of Greece, without a single word of protest? And, in spite of all these affronts the King is base enough to fawn on the French and English Ministers and on Admiral Dartige du Fournet.

“ You say you are on the point of resigning and coming to join us. That is not, however, at all what we want. You should come as an officer; that is the only way of protesting against a King to whom no respect or consideration is due. To resign from the army is to show him a deference of which he is unworthy. You say, ‘ So long as you are not fighting my presence is useless. I hate all these preliminaries; ’ but if everyone thought like you who would prepare the army on which all our hopes are based? You want to come here and find everything ready, so that you simply have to start fighting. To fight for his country is the privilege and the most desirable thing for a soldier. It is thus a pleasure that you seek, and to attain it you wish to avoid all duty and all fatigue. You wish to escape all the ups and downs, the waiting, the deceptions, the bitterness, the anxieties, the defaults with which revolutionary and political crises like that through which our country is now passing are so full.

“ It is easy to say, ‘ Take the bull by the horns, ’

but it is also necessary to be acquainted with the reverse side of diplomacy, and to know that there are many things to take into consideration. Again, what trust can the Allies have in us when they see us show so much regard and consideration for a King who has committed so many crimes? There is no example of a sovereign who has knowingly wished to destroy an entire nation, yielded his fortresses to the enemy, encouraged desertion, killed the national spirit, delivered entire populations to the assassin, starved others to give the harvest to the enemy, and finally threatened to put everything to fire and the sword to satisfy an implacable hate.

“I know quite well that the Balkan front is important; I even have a firm presentiment that it is in the Balkans that the Boche break-up will be started, but that will call for large forces. It is to that end that we must strain every effort, for we alone can give them to the Entente.

“I know that marking time—with which you reproach us—is fatal and disastrous for an army; but to take the offensive, of which you speak so lightly, General Sarrail counted on the Greek army, but on the army before it had been plunged by the criminal Constantine party into its present state of demoralization.

“I who write all this sometimes feel discouraged and disheartened by ———. But these are only passing fits of depression, only isolated cases which could not spoil our work and prevent the nation from living and rising again. We must all do our duty, make every effort for our country in danger

—even if we should perish in the attempt ; but we should die fighting, sword in hand.

“ G. M.”

21

“ The Front,

“ 17th November, 1916.

“ MY DEAR ———, at Athens,

“ Your letter has broken my heart. You say, ‘ In spite of everything and before everything do not forget how good the King has been to you, and how attached he was to you. Had the King been all that ten-fold the idea of the Fatherland must always prevail with me over all other considerations, and this Fatherland the King has betrayed, has trampled on.

“ For him there is no Fatherland ; his Fatherland, his conscience, his religion, are hatred and vengeance. No nobility, no greatness of soul. If the King has shown me kindnesses I have repaid them by my services, and specially by my efforts to lead him into the right path. I have always obeyed my conscience only, and my conscience does not reproach me.

“ If, like me, you had seen, on the road to Serrés families, that yesterday were prosperous, breaking stones to get a crust of bread ; if you saw evening after evening the poor little children of refugees gathering a few sticks to make a bit of fire ; if, like me, you saw proof every day of the contempt in which foreigners hold everything Greek, you, too,

would curse instead of defending him who has dishonoured your race.

“ And yet, my dear ———, I, who write all this, when, being in Salonica the other day, I saw Cretans of the Royal Guard, who had adhered to the movement, give me the same respectful salute as in former days, the sight of them in full uniform, as when they mounted guard at the Palace, brought a lump into my throat. They brought back to me the time when, a faithful servant of the King, I still struggled to save him. I was profoundly moved at the recollection, but I soon recovered. We must not allow ourselves to flinch. If I still sometimes think of the past, and if, perhaps, at the crisis I might defend him with my own body as a shield against the sword of vengeance, it would be in memory of our old friendship, and with the feeling of pity that one feels for the condemned man who at the supreme moment expiates his crimes.

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“ Yes, everything that comes from Athens now is foul, ugly, sickening. If there is a single ray of light still shining in this poor country, it is here at the Front, in face of the enemy, that it must be sought. It is with our very blood that we must wash away from our children the infamy with which the King has branded them. When a few days ago we sustained our first casualties, men killed, oh irony of fate ! by Greek guns and shells handed over to the Bulgars at Cavalla, we experienced a feeling of real pride, I might almost say of joy. At this very moment it may be that there is fighting

in the streets of Athens, to defend against Admiral Dartige du Fournet the arms and the honour . . . of Greece! Why was not that done at Rupel and at Cavalla? Tell me why.

“What you write about Spain does not hold water. It is a German *canard*. What is really serious is the question of the Italians, who, as M. Veniselos feared with such good reason two years ago, and as he often said to the King, do all they can to replace us here, in Epirus and in Asia Minor. Every Italian soldier that I meet makes me curse the more vehemently him who is the cause of their presence on Greek soil.

“G. M.”

22

“The Front,

“9th December, 1916.

“To ———, in Athens,

.

“What a state of rottenness, of servility, of degradation have you all reached to characterize still as traitors the man and those with him whose sole object is to seek to save you from treachery?

.

“The other day, when the gutter Press of the Constantine party accused M. Veniselos of himself pointing the guns of the French fleet at Athens, that great patriot begged me, in Salonica, to go to H.R.H. the Prince Regent of Serbia and apologize for his inability to accept his invitation to dinner



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that evening, 'for,' he instructed me to tell the prince, 'Greece is in mourning.' And truly, at that moment, she was plunged, through the fault of the King, in shame and infamy.

"You dare to accuse me of conspiracy! No, I cannot call myself a conspirator, when I cry aloud, and throw your infamy in your face!

"For the moment our only thought is to save Macedonia, but for that we need arms, those arms that the real traitors, those of Athens, have handed over to the Bulgars!

"You dare to accuse the French of having fired first when we know that, notwithstanding the promises made by the King of Athens to Dartige du Fournet, the French columns were treacherously attacked when they were quietly drinking their soup and their arms were stacked!

"You dare to accuse us of conspiracy when we know (I have in my pocket the deposition of a witness, A. G., 2nd Co., 1st Batt. 1st Regiment) that last Thursday, the eve of this new St. Bartholomew, the royal prince visited the quarters of the infantry, exhorting them all to exterminate the English and the French! . . .

"You dare to deny that all of you who are faithful to the King, all, from the highest to the lowest, are in some way or another paid and maintained by German gold, to sell Greece to Germany.

"You still dare to advise respect towards a King who, as the first condition of ceding material to the French admiral, demands the surrender of a Cretan chief, in order to satisfy a base vengeance that would disgrace even the lowest of the low.

“ You dare to deny the hunting down of men, the hunting down of Veniselists, brutally carried out in the streets of Athens amid the plaudits of certain furies of our caste.

“ You dare to point out to me the only way to return to Athens! Think rather how you are going to remain there when the hour of chastisement arrives. Learn that now we all have in our hearts as much hate towards the assassins of Athens as towards our worst enemies.

“ Yes, think on that hour. For my part, I shall not return to Athens until I am sure that the heads of traitors will fall and that their worthy furies will be horsewhipped in the market place.

“ Do not dare again to tell me to disown M. Veniselos. M. Veniselos has always been for me the very incarnation of the Fatherland, and the Fatherland I will never disown. I will only leave it for so long as this horde of savages sullies its soil.

“ G. M.”

23

“ The Front,

“ 2nd August, 1918.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ Although I have reached the age at which nothing should surprise me I must confess that your letter has astonished me.

“ That you should support your wife (who, between ourselves, has never been capable of very profound reflection) is your right, or, I should rather

say, your duty. But that you should seek to impose on me a conditional friendship is really a bit too much.

“ Love is blind, it is true ; but friendship is not. Friendship, on the other hand, is based on esteem, and as I am so constituted that I cannot esteem a man who makes ignominy his religion and a perjurer his diety, I bluntly refuse the friendship that you so magnanimously offer to me the traitor, to me the coward, to me the perjurer who has preferred his flag, honour and the Fatherland to the worthless idol before which you prostrate yourself.

“ How blind you are ! If you have forgotten all that I, the former secretary to the King, said and prophesied more than three years ago, do you not even read the official books, the diplomatic reports, the newspapers ? What more do you want ? And maybe there is even worse to be told than is already known.

“ No. I find myself unable to have the least esteem for people who, through sycophancy, stupidity, interest, or cowardice, continue to call themselves ‘ faithful ’ to the King.

“ Every soldier that I see fall by my side (and I have seen many), the least groan of the wounded, seems to me like a curse against him who is the cause of all the evil.

“ The English and the French have brought relief and civilization to Macedonia, and wherever else they have been. Come and see for yourself what the accursed allies of the ex-King have done to invaded Macedonia, and ask his countless victims whether they prefer the Bulgar and the Boche or

the Briton and the Gaul. And to think that this man and his infernal staff wanted (and nearly succeeded) to deliver Athens over to these barbarians.

“ I am greatly upset at writing to you in such a tone, for I do not forget either our old friendship or what you have done for me. Gratitude is part of my religion, but I feel that it can remain complete without personal relations necessarily existing. It seems to me that there is a limit to everything, and especially to one’s patience, and to my mind, when we come shortly to Athens for a few days’ leave from the front, where we have been fighting and risking our lives day and night for months past, it would be unbearable to meet imbeciles who dared to turn their backs on us when really they should shrink from our sight.

“ G. M.”

24

“ The Front,
“ 12th July, 1918.

“ To the Hon. Arthur Crosfield, London.

“ My DEAR SIR ARTHUR,

“ . . . You will have learned of the success of our troops in the last attack of Serka di Legen. According to all the gallant French who took part in this action our soldiers did wonders. I was fortunate enough to be in it, and I am pleased to be able to say that, after seeing the keenness of our battalions, under the command of our gallant



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General Ioanou, I felt that we had recovered our honour.

“That day my thoughts turned to you, Sir Arthur, and to all the Philhellenes. I know that the news of our successes must have given you pleasure.

“I have just been sent to the Strouma in the English sector as *liaison* officer between the English 16th Corps and our 1st Corps. I am delighted to be among the English, and particularly to have as chief General Briggs, the corps commander. All the officers of the corps staff, without exception, do everything they can to help us. If we had a few men in Greece like General Briggs, England would need no treaty with Greece to bind her to herself for ever. His untiring and fatherly interest for the men, the attention he devotes to the smallest details concerning the well-being and safety of the army, have made him the idol of our soldiers, who eagerly look forward to his daily visit to the front line. I am sure that your brother must know him, at least by name, for at the beginning of the war he commanded a brigade of cavalry on the Western front. . . .

“Be assured that I will neglect nothing to bind still closer the ties of sympathy between our two countries. I know that you will do the same. . . .

“But, above all, I cannot too often repeat that England must cease to philander with our enemies the Turks and Bulgars.

“G. M.”

25

Letter to M. A. Gauvin, Paris.*

“ Paris,

“ 3rd April, 1919.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ In continuation of our conversation yesterday, let me tell you again that I have read a letter from King George I. of Greece to his son Constantine, written shortly after the capture of Jannina in 1913 by our army, and just before the hateful assassination at Salonica.

“ In this letter, speaking of President Veniselos and alluding to his great value, he said: ‘ He is a veritable rock, to which we must all cling for the welfare of Greece and of ourselves.’

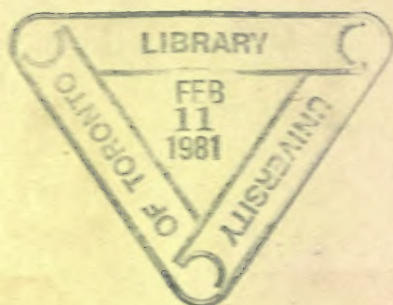
“ We know how much attention the ex-King paid to this advice and to the magnificent political testament of his predecessor, whose fine intuition and clear perception had from the beginning been able to discern the value of the eminent statesman whose Ententophile policy he would no doubt have supported with all his force, not only because of the high esteem in which he held his Prime Minister and his own love for France and England, but also because of his profound hatred for the Germans.

“ Yours, etc.,

“ G. M.

* This letter has been published in the *Journal des Débats*.

THE END.



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